April 2012

Creation of a Regional Report

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Project: JW3-JW3

Creation of a Regional Report

A Major Qualifying Project

Submitted to the Faculty

of

WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Bachelor of Science

in Professional Writing

by

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26 April 2012

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Abstract

With the recent reorganization of the American Red Cross, the Central and Western Massachusetts region now produces one annual report instead of four, smaller reports. The goal of this MQP was to design an annual report with the help of American Red Cross representatives. Identifying stakeholders, the rhetorical situation of the annual report, and common techniques used within annual reports created a basis for the development of the document. Due to time constraints, some portions of the final product were left for future volunteer work. The report provides detailed suggestions to reconcile these portions of the report with the finalized sections. The process of developing the document also led to observations on the future of annual reports and their use of technology.

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1 Introduction

Recently, four chapters of the American Red Cross merged to become the American Red Cross of Central and Western Massachusetts. The merger has had several repercussions. The most obvious of these is that the single chapter now covers a much larger area than any one of the previous chapters (see Figure 1 - Massachusetts Regional Boundaries). As a result, each chapter is no longer publishing separate annual reports. Instead, they must collaborate and publish one cohesive annual report. Since the Red Cross relies heavily on donations, an effective annual report may help to encourage continuing support.

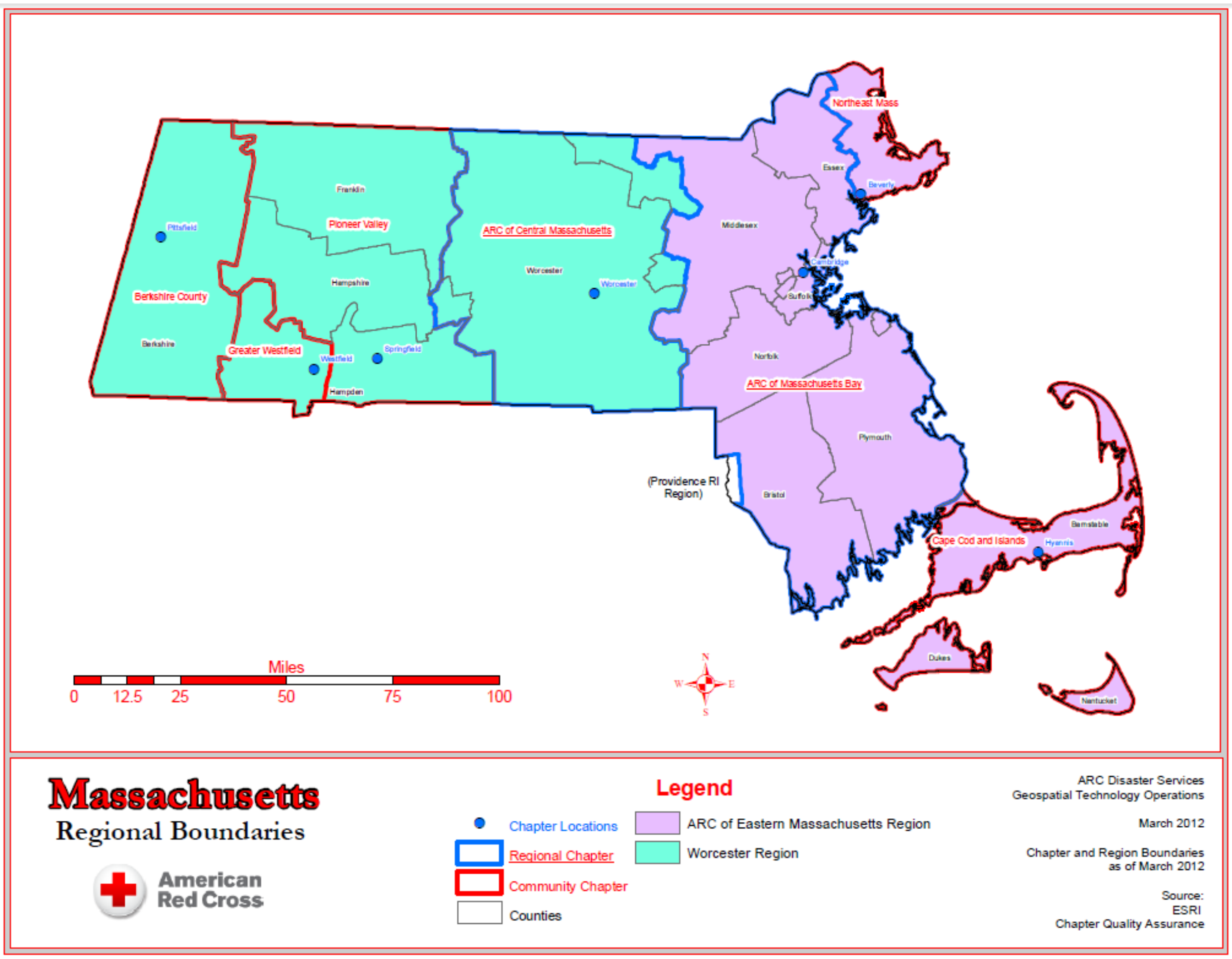

Figure 1 - Massachusetts Regional Boundaries (American Red Cross, 2010)

The American Red Cross is a non-profit humanitarian organization, founded in 1881 by Clara Barton. Their mission is simple, although it can be complex in its undertaking: “[to] provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies” (American Red Cross, 2010). While the majority of their work focuses upon disaster response, the American Red Cross also provides blood services, assistance to military families, community service, and international relief. On a local level, American Red Cross chapters most frequently respond to house fires and host blood drives. They also provide health and safety training for local schools and companies.

Due to a harsh disaster season in 2011, the American Red Cross started to reorganize from individual chapters into regions. This new structure aims to cut costs, balance budgets, and run more efficiently in general (Cumbow, 2011; Parker, 2011; Schramm, 2011). The merger has changed the structure of the Red Cross, shifting staff positions that had been responsible for developing reports. The former directors of each individual chapter may have separate ideas which could conflict and reduce the effectiveness of the report. However, Massachusetts’ recent natural disasters have helped bring the Red Cross to the forefront of public thought. With the 2012 Springfield tornadoes, Hurricane Irene, and the 2012 October snowstorm, the newly formed chapter has the perfect opportunity to improve their reputation.

Beyond these more obvious issues, the Red Cross now has a few more subtle issues. For one, the larger regional model also demands more from the actual staff of the Red Cross. Therefore, it makes sense to delegate certain tasks to volunteers. The issue present here, however, is that most volunteers lack the professional training to develop a report that will serve as an effective donation and public relations tool. Hand-in-hand with this is that there is no guarantee that a single volunteer (with previous experience or not) will be available each year.

On a more macro scale, the National American Red Cross organization is also facing a time of uncertain reputation. Their former image of wartime medics and unbiased assistance has faded and much of their work goes unnoticed or unrecognized. Many consider the organization simply as disaster response (as evidenced by their classification in several non-profit rankings (Philanthropedia, 2011; Charity Navigator, 2010)). Such a reputation may encourage donation only during disasters, although the Red Cross works year-round. Ensuring their audience is aware of their other services may help to increase donations throughout the year.

The American Red Cross of Central and Western Massachusetts has decided to sponsor this project to create a regional report to be used for the next three to five years. This regional report would be modeled on an annual report, but must remain relevant throughout its document life. As such, any dates within the report would need to remain vague about the actual publication date. This means that most data would be correlated over several years previous to the actual publication date and any direct references to a large event would need to avoid specifying that it had happened too recently.

In order to meet this goal, the American Red Cross and Worcester Polytechnic Institute worked together to understand annual reports as a genre, negotiate designs and author material to be published within the annual report. Regional Development Officer Janet Warren and Director of Communications and Special Events Darice Aubuchon of the American Red Cross and Professors Jennifer deWinter and Brenton Faber of Worcester Polytechnic Institute contributed ideas, edited and oversaw the project. Timothy Shaffer was responsible for developing iterative designs. Written material was contributed from existing Red Cross material, Janet Warren and Timothy Shaffer. This report documents the project's process and considerations.

In the next chapter, I will begin to analyze annual reports in order to develop a clear understanding of the genre and the techniques used within. I begin by discussing the origins of annual reports, how they are affected by their audience and what communicative purposes they intend to convey in order to understand the basic need for an annual report and how this extends to non-profit organizations. From here, I apply Berkenkotter and Huckin's genre analysis framework to situate the genre of annual reports and discuss why they are effective. With that information in hand, I perform a formal analysis upon three non-profit annual reports to identify key features common to annual reports. Within Chapter 3, I present the American Red Cross report in full to showcase product of this project along with a description of its rhetorical situation. While the report is not completed, many features identified within Chapter 2 are implemented within the design. Each page is presented, in order, to allow the reader to regard the work as it would be printed. Chapter 4 discusses the process for developing the annual report, including the choices and negotiations made at each step. I will call to attention specific features identified through formal analysis as they are applied within the final product. In addition, I will present previous drafts and discuss the shortcomings of their design. Finally, this chapter also details the considerations of the authors and editors when choosing to move forward with a design. Finally, I conclude in Chapter 5 with observations on the intricacies of this project and the future of annual reports.

2 Annual Reports as a Genre

Annual reports are a complex genre with specific purposes, origins and limitations. Within this chapter, I discuss annual reports from their beginnings as a required company document to the relatively recent trend in non-profit annual reports. From here, I will briefly discuss the existing model of non-profit annual reports and recent trends in their design. With these definitions in hand, I can begin to analyze annual reports in a productive manner with a specific goal of a successful annual report in mind. At the same time, this information may help to serve as a guide for more detailed research on what each section is intended to accomplish.

Annual reports are documents that detail a company or organization's financial status and general operations. As required by the United State Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) (2011), companies must publish annual reports such that investors may assess if they will invest in the company. The document brings a level of clarity into the way the company acquires and spends its funds as well as how it has fared at the conclusion of the fiscal year. According to The Free Dictionary, an annual report is required by law to "include a balance sheet reflecting changes in the corporation's financial worth, an income and cash flow statement, and other relevant documentation, all of which must be reviewed first by outside auditors" (Farlex). Other than these legal requirements, companies are free to design their annual report however they would like.

An annual report for a publicly traded company, of course, focuses upon financial data, which is often interpreted as un-biased data. Furthermore, it typically contains all of the important data in one place and accounts only for a specific time as required by the SEC (2011). This allows annual reports to be used as a metric for an organization's success. Within recent years, non-profit annual reports have become customary public relations documents. As Kivi

Leroux Miller (How to Write a Nonprofit Annual Report), president of two non-profit communications consulting companies, notes, most non-profit organizations are not required by law to publish an annual report, but many continue to do so. Failing to publish a report can actually cause concern within supporters of the organization. At the same time, however, non-profit organizations enjoy a greater degree of freedom in their annual reports.

Without legal requirements, some organizations struggle with the idea of what should be included in an annual report or how they can present themselves. As an expert on non-profit communication, Miller suggests that non-profit organizations emphasize accomplishments, narrative (both to describe financials and the organization's story for the year), photos, and personal stories (How to Write a Nonprofit Annual Report). Davison (2009), a chartered accountant and Professor of Accounting, also notes an increase in attention to the *paratext* of annual reports (both corporate and non-profit), a term she borrows from Genette. The *paratext* of an annual report includes all elements not included in the copy, such as any visual features, the title, or the material the document was printed on (p. 121).

Several other authors have also sought to investigate the different aspects of annual reports that have risen from this freedom of design. In general, the primary focus of research has revolved around the ways in which companies try to present themselves in a positive light through different techniques. Carol David (2001), a professor of rhetoric and professional communication, has become a vital source in the discussion of the use of graphics to create "cultural myths" within annual reports. Her work investigates the *ethos*[1] surrounding annual reports as financial document and the resulting credibility it lends to the freely designed sections

[1] *Ethos* is one of Artistotle's three appeals, referring to the credibility of the author. In this case, the organization is seen as the author and the ethos is established by the perpetuation of the genre. See Section 2.4.1 for more information on how ethos is perpetuated within the genre.

(p. 217). Feng Li, a professor of accounting at University of Michigan, has applied a different approach in attempting to demystify the readability of annual reports. Instead of applying a traditional form of literary analysis, he uses a mathematical model to suggest trends between the readability of an annual report and the earnings of the company it represents. Li's work provides insight into how designers can alter a reader's perception of the organization.

2.1 Accountability

Since corporate annual reports are actually legal documents, the focus on accountability has dictated their design since their inception. While the modern glossy-style annual report is not explicitly required by law, companies are required by the SEC to provide shareholders with an annual report on the current state of the company each time it elects directors. This report must give shareholders an accurate impression of the company's profitability; failure to do so can result in harsh punishments for the company (United States Securities and Exchange Commission, 2011). In light of this, companies often model their annual reports on another required document, known as Form 10-K. This form "provides a comprehensive overview of the company's business and financial condition and includes audited financial statements" as required by the SEC (Form 10-K, 2009). By reusing and designing around this information, the company can guarantee its report is accurate and avoid any penalties.

While some companies do simply use their Form 10-K as their annual report (United States Securities and Exchange Commission, 2011), it is quite possible that shareholders will get a negative impression. Instead, many companies have been moving to a glossy annual report that still covers the necessary financial information. This format requires more effort, but gives the company an opportunity to present themselves beyond the sheer numbers. Of course, the need for accuracy still dictates the design: Since shareholders must be able to use an annual report to make decisions with the company, the report must still contain financial information (Penrose, 2008). The company is accountable for presenting themselves in such a manner that a shareholder can make an educated decision.

Although non-profit organizations are not directly accountable for information in their annual reports, it continues to be a driving force in their designs. Returning to David's (2001) claim of an annual report's ethos as a financial document lending credibility to the non-financial sections of the annual report (p. 217), it is possible that non-profit organizations simply wish to take advantage of this existing ethos for the entire document. It is likely that their audience will see an annual report as an authoritative document designed with accountability in mind, therefore granting the organization a powerful public relations tool. At the same time, however, organizations are still indirectly accountable for all information included within their annual report. If a donor discovers that an annual report contains misinformation, they are likely to stop donating to the organization.

2.2 Audience

Next to an annual report's legal requirements, the audience is perhaps the largest driving force of its design. Michael Kent (2011), a professor in public relations, discusses the idea of organizational rhetoric which suggests that reactionary media (such as news reports, classroom lectures and even Twitter posts) may spawn from public relations documents. As a result, it is difficult to determine who may end up reading the document and how they may perceive the information presented to them (p. 553). This is of vital importance to the organization as it is unknown what kind of background the audience may have. Fortunately, annual reports are known as primarily financial documents and can expect an audience to have some grasp of accounting (Li, 2008; David, 2001). For companies, this simplifies matters greatly; federal law has already identified the primary audience as investors and regulates the report to protect them (David, 2001). Due to this, any other audiences are essentially negligible. Most investors will already know the company and may have followed it with interest throughout the year. In addition, their contributions to the company are not permanently lost; they can sell their stock at any time.

For non-profit organizations, the situation is significantly different. Funding comes primarily from donors and money is not the only resource required for the organization to run. In addition, donors are much more varied than investors: Anyone can donate any amount and will be rewarded with tax credit. David (2001) explains that the audience for an annual report is already very wide (p. 204), yet due to the nature of open donations, non-profit annual reports tend to appeal to a much wider audience. It is nearly impossible to address every issue that such an audience may care about, so it makes sense to design the document with specific subset audience in mind. For example, potential volunteers are more likely interested in what they will be doing within the organization, how many other volunteers it has and how volunteers succeed as a result of the organization's efforts. Donors, on the other hand, tend to care more about how their funds are being used and if the organization can still be trusted with their money. As Figure 2 – The various audiences of non-profit annual reports describes, it becomes necessary to break these groups into primary and secondary audiences.

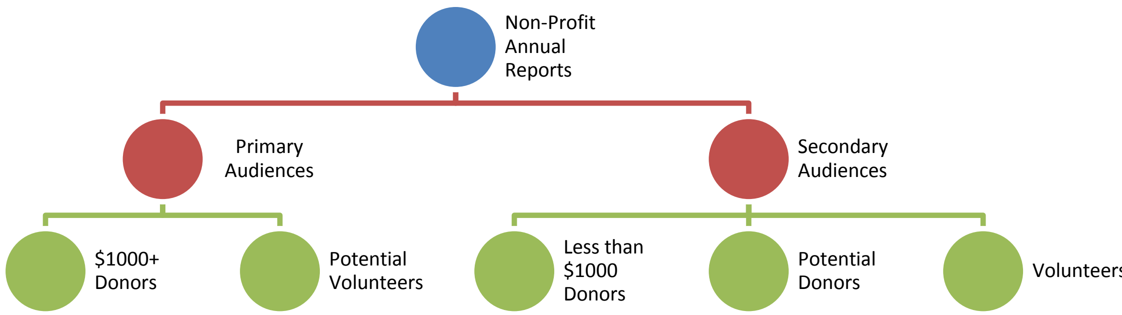

Figure 2 - The various audiences of non-profit annual reports

As an organization may have many donors with largely varied backgrounds, it is difficult to approximate how to design for the group. A common solution for this is to divide donors into three groups: Donors of a certain minimum threshold, donors below that threshold and potential donors. Depending on where this threshold is set, it may indicate certain features of the audience. For instance, donors of $1000 or more are likely reasonably wealthy and thus have the capability to make a yearly donation of $1000. It follows that these donors are established within their lives and therefore likely older. This was confirmed by the American Red Cross, who noted that the average age of donors was near 60. Donors of smaller amounts may also read the report, but may contribute comparatively inconsequential amounts. As such, they have a less vested interest in the outcome of their donation and may be disinterested in the annual report at all. For those that do read the annual report, they will likely look for the same information that larger donors do. Finally, potential donors are unlikely to see the document unless they are somehow directed to it by an acquaintance. An annual report should still be able to convince potential donors to make a contribution, but it makes little sense intentionally designing a document to suit the needs of such a small percentage of readers.

Similarly, there are two possible groups of volunteers: Potential volunteers and existing volunteers. This division is interesting in that the relationships are reversed from the donor audiences. Since existing volunteers already operate with the Red Cross, they are likely aware of the organization's accomplishments and have already formed their views on how it is run. In fact, volunteers almost certainly know intimate details of the organization's operation. As such, it makes little sense to target them with a somewhat general document. Instead, the Red Cross has explained that it would like to show their annual report to potential volunteers to give them a quick overview of the organization. As the primary resources of the Red Cross are time and money, this provides a way to use the ethos of an annual report to move beyond financial purposes and into recruiting more effort for the movement. While this audience is still quite varied, they already share at least one trait: an interest in working for the Red Cross.

While the resulting document focuses on specific groups' expectations and needs, it does not mean that it is utterly useless to other audiences. Much of the targeted information can still be examined by other audiences and may influence them anyway. It is important to continue to present a positive image to secondary audiences who may have interests that overlap with the primary audience.

2.3 Purposes

These varied groups of people beget many different purposes that an annual report may serve simultaneously. For companies, their primary purpose is to meet their legal requirements. Beyond those, as John Penrose (2008), a professor of business communication, discusses, its evolution as a document has made it into a marketing tool (p. 158). By addressing their audience qualitatively in addition to the required financial reports, organizations may be able to emphasize or downplay the financial data. Companies are well-known for speaking to investors through qualitative accomplishments, statements of future goals and assertions of their relative stability (Li, 2008; Penrose, 2008). These can encourage an investor to trust in the company despite a difficult situation or potentially invest even more in a company that is doing well. In either case, the primary extralegal purpose of the document is to promote the financial welfare of the company through investors. To accomplish this, each page has its own purpose, such as inspiring confidence, setting expectations for the future or establishing authority within the document.

For a non-profit organization with fewer requirements and a much wider audience, it is quite simple for the demands on an annual report to spiral out of control. In the case of this project, the American Red Cross had declared it would like to primarily target donors of $1000 or more. With this audience came a set of expectations for the annual report: First, it would need to suggest to these donors that the Red Cross was worthy of their money. Second, donors had to be convinced that their funding had been used appropriately. Finally, the report should encourage these donors to donate even more money. At the same time, however, the American Red Cross wanted to distribute their report for recruiting, recognition and to address recent events within the chapter.

In order to effectively convey its purpose to such a vital audience, an annual report typically contains several identifiable parts, each intended to accomplish specific goals (David, 2001; Graves, Flesher, & Jordan, 1996). Together, they draw in the audience, provide them with a picture of the organization and impress upon the reader the intent of the product. No section is designed haphazardly; the audience is likely to read at random (David, 2001, p. 204). It could be any individual section that fulfills the purpose of the document or encourages the reader to investigate further.

2.4 Investigation of Annual Reports through Two Analytic Frameworks

As a document structured around accountability, directed by its audience and bound to many varied purposes, it is challenging to isolate replicable features that can be used for several different audiences and still persist through time. To overcome this difficulty, I will use genre analysis and a formalist analysis in an attempt to examine individual parts of annual reports at a rudimentary level and then use these to develop the annual report for the American Red Cross. This chapter will outline this approach and delve into the detailed investigation of each part.

In designing a document, it is important to understand the essence of the document and what each component attempts to accomplish. Two forms of literary analysis already exist for precisely this purpose: Genre analysis and formal analysis. On one hand, genre analysis examines the document at a high level, inspecting the situation that dictates what goes into a genre. These considerations will help to develop an understanding of what is expected of a document in the genre of annual reports and ground the final product firmly in the realm of annual reports. On the other hand, formal analysis is used to investigate the choices made within annual reports to fulfill the purposes of the document. This brings forth common design choices such as alignment, repetition and the general structure of the document and the reasons for employing them. Together, these analyses should suggest both a specific form and content.

2.4.1 Genre Analysis

Genre analysis is particularly useful for understanding how writers within a given field write about their field and choose to present information. As such, genres can exist in many different forms, from a simple letter to a complex journal article. Devitt (1993) writes that genres provide not only a guide for writers, but insight into the practices they employ. She argues that the various choices made within a genre articulate practices and goals within the field. As experts in the field of communication, Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) reinforce Devitt by defining genre as “the media through which scholars and scientists communicate with their peers … they package ideas in ways that conform to a discipline’s norms, values, and ideology” (p. 1). In the case of a non-profit annual report, this definition is muddled somewhat: Technically, the genre of an annual report is designed for a financial discipline, of which a non-profit organization's audience may not have a grasp. This, however, begins to call to of Berkenkotter and Huckin's theoretical framework laid out in their book. Their framework consists of five primary elements that make up genre knowledge, or the understanding of genres: Dynamism, Situatedness, Form and Content, Duality of Structure, and Community Ownership (Genre knowledge in disciplinary communication, 1995). By examining each of these elements in relation to a specific work, it is possible to define what constitutes the genre of that specific work. This, in turn, creates ethos that reciprocally affects the audience of works properly situated within the audience.

Returning to the non-profit audience's lack of financial training, we can use this as an opportunity to define the first of the five elements: Dynamism is the idea that genres are created as a result of "recurrent situations," but continue to adapt to writers' needs (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995). In this case, the genre of an annual report (traditionally a corporate document) is adapting to suit the needs of non-profit organizations and may need to alter their approach somewhat. At the same time, even non-profit annual reports are responding to a recurrent situation: A yearly report of the organization's activities as leadership changes or a new fiscal year arrives. This also leaves opportunity to revisit the genre of the report each year and make changes to adapt to changes in how the form is being used.

Annual reports are, by their nature, dynamic. Every year, organizations create a new annual report, but base their design in lessons learned from previous reports. Perhaps the greatest variation on the genre is found within the themes and covers presented each year (some examples can be found on DzineBlog, as cited in the Bibliography). In order to carry out these themes throughout the document, finer formal changes may be needed. Eventually, some of these changes could catch on and become standard within the genre. Such a change has already caught on once with the production of non-profit annual reports. Since non-profit organizations are not required by law to produce an annual report, it is somewhat surprising to see such widespread use of the genre. At the same time, the freedom given to non-profit organizations has suggested a change in the genre as used by corporations. It will be important to leave adequate room for the genre to grow and change in the design of an annual report for the American Red Cross.

Of course, a genre must develop from somewhere as well; this is the heart of Situatedness. From Berkenkotter and Huckin's definition of genre, they claim that a genre is essentially a vessel for conveying information from a specific field. As such, it would logically spawn from within that field as well. The various methods of communication common to a field that are carried over between the "systems of genre" (as Bhatia briefly discusses) situate a specific genre within its field. Bhatia (2002) continues to note how annual reports can be called a mixed genre due to the multiple communicative purposes and thus the multiple fields in which it may be situated. Annual reports must describe the financial situation of a company as well as serve as a promotional document. Non-profit organizations have an added concern in that not all of their resources are monetary as well.

It is somewhat difficult to situate annual reports as they intend to serve many purposes simultaneously. One option is to situate the report in the financial field and foreground resources and assets. The primary concern with this approach is that this information may be left to interpretation and may not have the desired impact with an audience that is less financially savvy. Another option is to ground the report in a promotional style by emphasizing specific accomplishments and progress. Of course, the issue here is accountability; accomplishments may be seen as hiding the raw finances. Many annual reports seem to search for a middle ground, situating specific sections of the annual report in one field versus another. (Li (2008) actually provides an interesting contrast between successful and unsuccessful companies and the emphasis they place on their financial data.) This is slightly more complex for non-profit organizations as they have a wider audience that is less likely to have much financial training and they also have a more varied range of resources they may wish to show. Instead of focusing upon one field or the other, non-profit annual reports tend to situate themselves within their mission statement. It is through this lens that they discuss everything else within their report.

Form and Content are any considerations of appropriate content at a given time for a given purpose. It is here that formal analysis begins to blend with genre analysis, but remain distinct as macro and micro versions of analysis. Berkenkotter and Huckin (1995) help draw this line by discussing locality of genres: The more specific or *local* a genre is, the more the content and form are defined. In our case, the genre of "American Red Cross of Central and Western Massachusetts annual reports" has much clearer expectations of content than the genre of "annual reports". For example, as we have already discussed, the American Red Cross is a non-profit organization with a completely different audience for its annual reports than an actual company.

In order to apply this piece of the framework, it seems necessary to choose how local the genre needs to be in order to appropriately design a product within the genre. If we were to start at a very local level, specifically that of American Red Cross of Central and Western annual reports, it would make sense to look at previous annual reports published within the chapter. While this is not technically possible as the chapter only recently formed from the four smaller chapters, there are some annual reports from within those four chapters. Unfortunately, they used a variety of forms, from brochures to quick lists. The content was similar, however, providing basic information about the status of the Red Cross for that year, including items such as the number of disasters responded to and the number of families assisted. This gives a basic idea of the kind of information available, but the inconsistency between reports means that the genre is not properly established at this level and it may be too localized.

Moving upward into the realm of all annual reports provides much more information about the form. Company and organization annual reports show a fairly consistent structure, moving from introductory material through accomplishments and into financial information. Unfortunately, the additional types of resources available to non-profit organizations and the less financially savvy audience mean that we are hard-pressed to learn much of content at this level. As such, it seems logical to draw from the form and content of non-profit annual reports.

Duality of Structure relates the interplay between author and work. In essence, it takes into consideration the conventions used by the author to differentiate a genre and the resulting reproduction of those conventions through the genre (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995). Looking to annual reports once again, the duality of structure within them is what separates them from other public relations materials or other financial documents. Of course, this division is much more radical than other genres' dualities of structure, but they are defined by markers nonetheless. The focus on accomplishment and representation of resources makes it clear that the annual report goes beyond simple finances or straightforward advertisement.

It is this hybridized form and the yearly production of the document that seem to make annual reports their own genre. In the case of typical promotional material, it tends to capitalize upon a current event or running trend. This information can quickly lose its relevance and has limited use for serious investigation of an organization. Financial material, however, is often defined by time ranges. Information accumulated for an entire year may be difficult to sort through and very dry. These two factors may dissuade a reader from understanding the standing the organization may be trying to present. The annual report attempts to find a compromise where financial information is represented and articulated to the best benefit of the organization.

Finally, Community Ownership draws upon the standard mode of communication within a specific group. More specifically, a genre is owned by a community when it follows the social norms of that community (Berkenkotter & Huckin, 1995). If a work is forcibly classified into a genre, but does not make use of these norms, it will be rejected by a community. This extends to every aspect of the work, but is most readily visible within form and content. Using Berkenkotter and Huckin's (1995) example, a biologist's scientific paper that does not conform to the normal method of reporting will be rejected by the biology community. It does not qualify as a scientific paper until it uses the correct form.

The concept of community ownership is somewhat difficult to apply to annual reports as they are technically given to the public and thus cannot be truly rejected. Instead, it may be the innate accountability attributed to annual reports that gives it community ownership. In some sense, an annual report is rejected when it provides inaccurate or misleading information. Take the Enron disaster: As Mellody Hobson (2002), Good Morning America's financial contributor, explains, their annual reports were not read three years prior to their downfall (How Can Investors Spot an Enron?). Perhaps this is a sign of rejection?

Of course, it would be far too easy if this framework encapsulated every consideration in genre analysis. Although many authors cite Berkenkotter and Huckin quite frequently, they also raise questions about genre from within this framework. Bhatia (2002), for example, notes variation in both perception and execution within a single genre title. This is somewhat related to the discussion of form and content, but instead hints at the possibility that a genre may not share traits between fields. Not only could a genre be localized, it could also be placed within a field. To clarify, is it not possible that a business letter within a scientific field can be entirely different than a business letter within realty? Such a point may not seem directly connected to the question of annual reports, as they are fairly similar between corporations and non-profit organizations, but the term "annual report" also has connotations within statistical reporting. In searching for information about annual reports, it became clear that there exist other genres of annual reports, including criminal activity reports, inventory reports and consumption reports.

These generic qualities provided by Berkenkotter and Huckin's framework also help to create ethos around annual reports. As is the nature of genres, they are re-used to comminicate with a specific audience in a specific way. Annual reports appeal to the stakeholders of corporations and organizations through financially grounded data and more qualitative accounts of accomplishments through the year. Over time, the use of annual reports and their strict rules for financial reporting have developed credibility with their audiences. This credibility is reinforced when companies fail to meet the standards set for annual reports and collapse. Although non-profit organizations are not subject to the same standards, the genre of annual reports continues to evoke the same ethos by convincing stakeholders that they have the same power as shareholders within a corporation.

2.4.2 Formal Analysis

As mentioned earlier, formal analysis focuses on the specific choices made within a document to define a form that is used throughout the genre. As described on the Purdue Online Writing Lab web site (2011), formalism insists that a work must be regarded separate from its authors and content to isolate the root intent of each choice made within (Brizee & Tompkins). As Victor Erlich (1980), a major scholar of formalism, describes in his book, these intents can be thought of as definitive of the type of literary work. As such, by applying a formal analysis to several annual reports, it should be possible to identify specific features used within annual reports that can be re-used in the annual report for the Red Cross. When combined with genre analysis and what we know of the audiences, purposes and ethos of an annual report, these features can then be implemented to present a targeted image of the Red Cross while maintaining the expectations of an annual report.

By inspecting several existing non-profit annual reports, it becomes apparent that there is a favored structure for non-profit annual reports. This structure is often linked together with a theme (Davison, 2009; David, 2001). The theme is carried throughout each section and helps maintain the paratext of the document. Besides the cover, which all annual reports have, most included a mission statement, a CEO letter, a series of narratives, financial information and finally a donor list. Within each of these sections, the various non-profit groups also used similar techniques among their annual reports. As organizations invest a great deal into the design of these reports (David, 2001, pp. 203-204), common features indicated by formal analysis are likely intentional rhetorical choices. Together, they produce an effective annual report.

Since the cover is typically the first part of a report that a reader will see, its design is vitally important to the success of the overall document. As Davidson (2009) points out, it is the first opportunity to convince the reader that the organization is worth time (p. 122). Not only can it showcase an accomplishment, it helps to establish the document as an official product of the organization. If a cover does not capture a reader’s attention, the reader has no incentive to read any other portion of the report (Davison, 2009). The careful design of the cover is highlighted by the consistency among many non-profit annual reports.

Figure 3 - Habitat for Humanity's 2010 Annual Report Cover (Habitat for Humanity International, 2010)

Organizations such as Rotary International, United Way and Habitat for Humanity make similar design choices to capture an audience. Perhaps the most obvious is their choice of picture: All three reports include smiling humans, in particular, smiling children. With the exception of Habitat for Humanity, these children are accompanied by a member of the organization. Without direct explanation, it is clear that these children have a positive relationship with the organization through their representative. By including living subjects, the picture humanizes the organization. The positive children can be seen as a sign that the organization is using its money to effectively help those who will become our future. The picture uses *pathos*[2] as a quick, powerful appeal to initially grab the reader's attention. Other than their

[2] *Pathos* is one of Aristotle's three rhetorical appeals, specifically the appeal to emotion.

pictures, all three annual reports display minimal text on the front beyond three items: A simple title, logo and the year. This helps to keep attention on the image itself.

Figure 4 - Rotary International's 2010 Annual Report Cover (Rotary International; The Rotary Foundation, 2010)

Beyond these similarities, each cover employs different methods to modify the picture's appeal. The Rotary International report makes use of a simple back cover to include a short explanation of the cover photo. This seems to be necessary due to a lack of logos or other symbols that represent the organization within the picture. United Way instead chooses to include a small word graphic pointing toward their mission, lending the photo some context and indication as to its relevance. Finally, Habitat for Humanity allows their photo to stand essentially on its own, instead deciding to initialize the theme of the report: "What we build". The implication, however, is that the house the child is standing within was built by Habitat for Humanity.

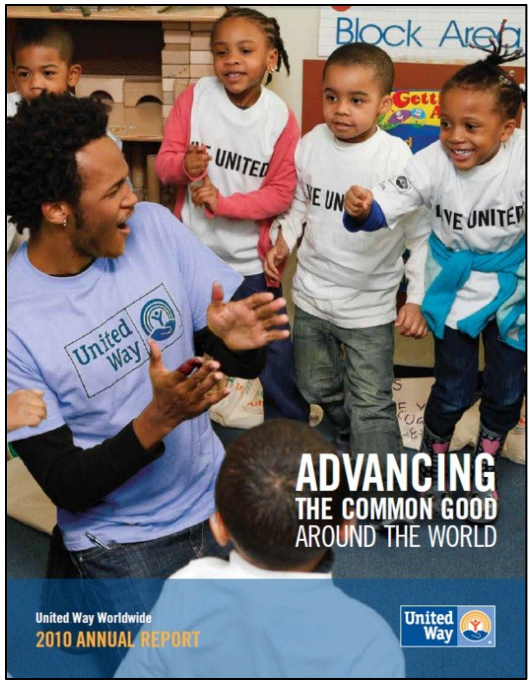

Figure 5 - United Way's 2010 Annual Report Cover (United Way Worldwide, 2010)

The back covers also exhibit some similarity among the three reports. Each one is very simple and contains little beyond the contact information and logo of the organization. In general, the back cover uses a single color background. This is likely to guide the reader to the contact information as it may not be presented elsewhere within the document and makes it extraordinarily easy for an interested reader to get more information. A likely reason for this is that it is common that the original reader will leave the document face-down. As such, if the document is neglected, the next reader may not own the copy and is only exposed to the back cover.

Often the first section within an annual report, the mission statement reminds the reader of the purpose of the organization, setting up the rest of the document to work within its bounds. It is through this lens that any other information in the annual report is then examined. Any accomplishments or financial data will be reviewed with the idea that they are in pursuit of the mission. For example, if an organization claimed a mission to rescue animals displaced by disasters and presented a large set of expenditures for parachutes, many readers would be upset. By suggesting such a mindset to the reader, the mission statement also helps direct the rest of the document. If the organization knows what the reader is looking for, they can create the rest of the document to suit that need.

Figure 6 - Rotary International's 2010 Mission Statement Page (Rotary International; The Rotary Foundation, 2010)

Returning to the examples of Rotary International, United Way and Habitat for Humanity, the inclusion of a defined aim of the organization seems to be standard. Both Rotary International and United Way include their tried and true mission statements, easily available wherever the organization believes it will speak to the public. The most obvious reason for this is to remind the audience as to what the organization stands for and why it exists. Naturally, this leads to reasons as to why a donor should contribute as well. Again, both annual reports feature photos of humans benefitting from the organization.

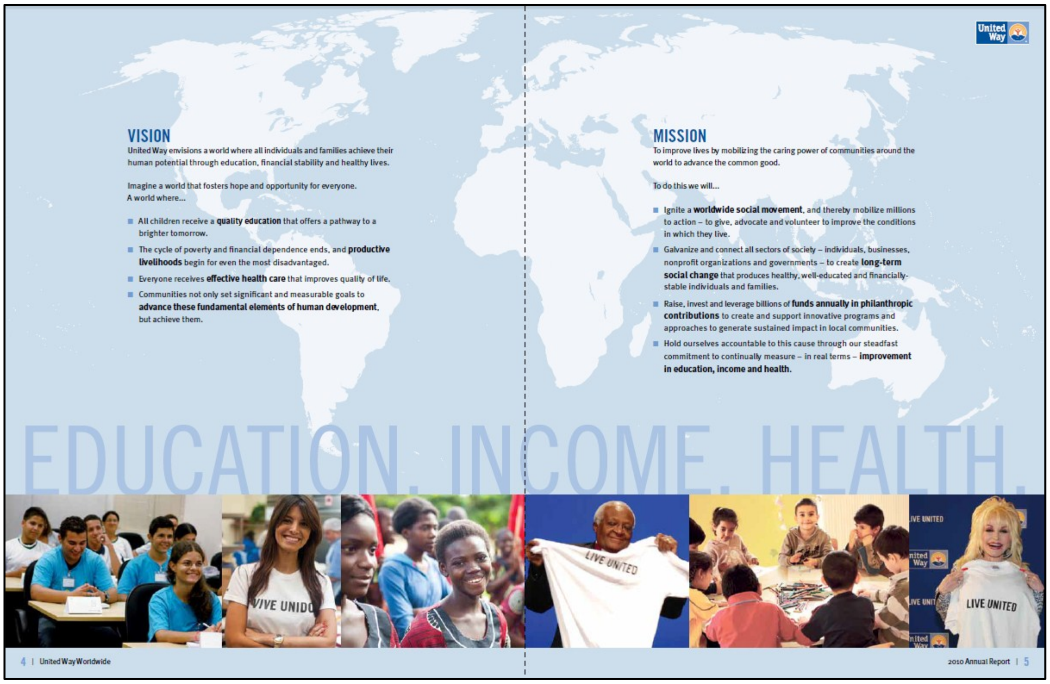

Figure 7 - United Way's 2010 Mission Statement Page (United Way Worldwide, 2010)

Habitat for Humanity's annual report deviates from the apparent norm by disregarding the standard mission statement and instead substituting a more personally written description of their aims. From examining their website, it would seem that this written description was crafted specifically for the annual report. It is possible that this approach is an attempt to make a more personal appeal or to humanize the organization further. Interestingly, Habitat for Humanity seems to have the least focus on photos of humans, despite the full-on prose of their goals.

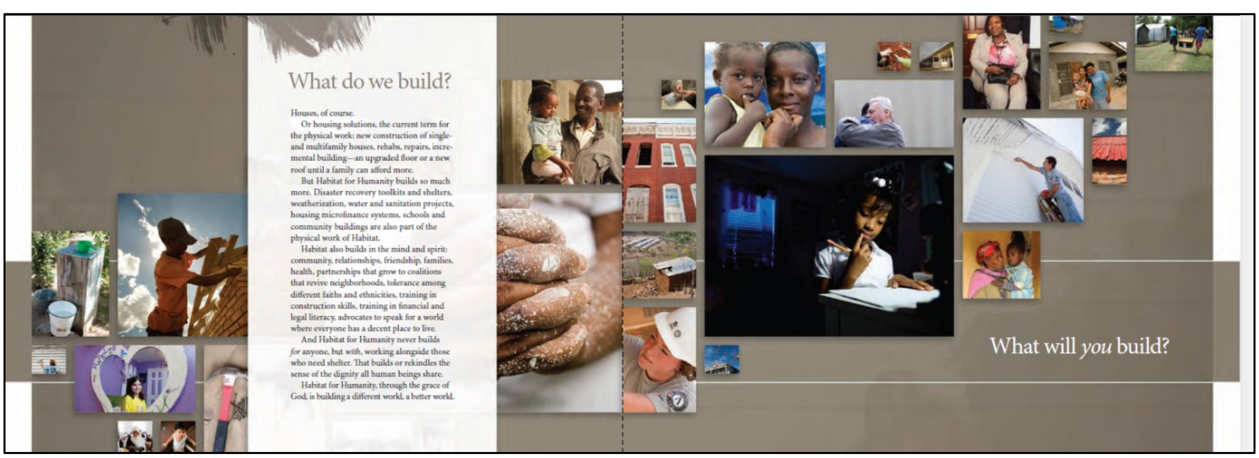

Figure 8 - Habitat for Humanity's 2010 Mission Statement Page (Habitat for Humanity International, 2010)

Since the annual report is often the first major organization publication each year (as it must be created at the end of a fiscal year), it is also the first opportunity for the leadership to announce a direction for the upcoming year. Typically the second entry in an annual report, the CEO letter helps to establish a sense of authority for the annual report. It serves as a sort of "seal of approval" from the leader of the organization. It suggests to the reader that the following pages have been reviewed at some level and deemed worthy of representing the organization. On top of this, the CEO letter allows the CEO to speak directly to the audience and set goals, discuss changes within the organization and respond to recent relevant issues (Conaway & Wardrope, 2010).

BUILDING ON OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Rotary Images

This year was one of both achievements and new beginnings for Rotary International and The Rotary Foundation.

Highlights from 2009-10 included passing the halfway mark in meeting Rotary's US$200 Million Challenge, impressive progress in polio eradication efforts in India and Nigeria, and the outpouring of Rotarian support following the devastating earthquake in Haiti.

Rotary's ability to adapt to changing times is reflected in the revised RI Strategic Plan, adopted by the RI Board in November after reviewing a survey of 14,000 Rotarians worldwide. The plan, effective 1 July 2010, comprises three priorities, all of equal importance to Rotary's future: support and strengthen clubs, focus and increase humanitarian service, and enhance public image and awareness.

The Rotary Foundation is also well positioned for Doing Good in the World under the new Future Vision Plan, designed to enable the Foundation to respond quickly, effectively, and strategically to the most urgent global needs. This year, 100 Future Vision pilot districts were selected and trained; this group will test and refine the new grant structure before it rolls out to all Rotary districts in 2013.

All Rotarians can take pride in our accomplishments and in the plans soundly laid for success in the years ahead. Rotary clubs are already turning those plans into reality by working to transform the lives of people in desperate circumstances, helping to bring the world closer to lasting peace.

John Kenny
2009-10 President
Rotary International

Glenn E. Estess Sr.
2009-10 Trustee Chair
The Rotary Foundation

All figures in U.S. dollars throughout this report.

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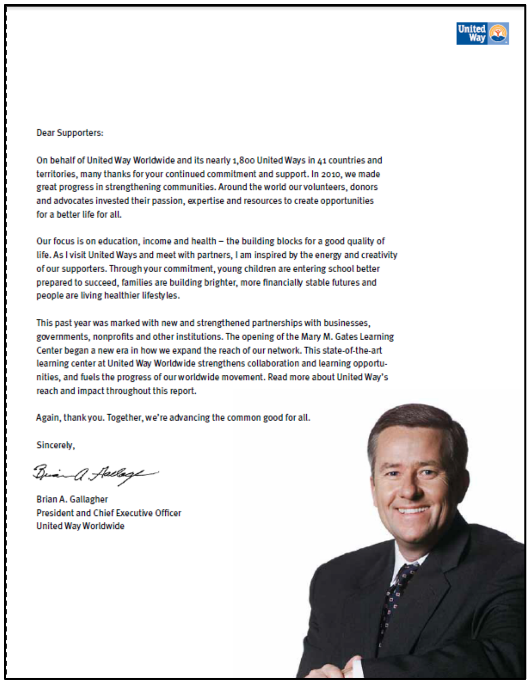
Figure 9 - Rotary International's 2010 CEO Letter (Rotary International; The Rotary Foundation, 2010)



United Way

Dear Supporters:

On behalf of United Way Worldwide and its nearly 1,800 United Ways in 41 countries and territories, many thanks for your continued commitment and support. In 2010, we made great progress in strengthening communities. Around the world our volunteers, donors and advocates invested their passion, expertise and resources to create opportunities for a better life for all.

Our focus is on education, income and health – the building blocks for a good quality of life. As I visit United Ways and meet with partners, I am inspired by the energy and creativity of our supporters. Through your commitment, young children are entering school better prepared to succeed, families are building brighter, more financially stable futures and people are living healthier lifestyles.

This past year was marked with new and strengthened partnerships with businesses, governments, nonprofits and other institutions. The opening of the Mary M. Gates Learning Center began a new era in how we expand the reach of our network. This state-of-the-art learning center at United Way Worldwide strengthens collaboration and learning opportunities, and fuels the progress of our worldwide movement. Read more about United Way's reach and impact throughout this report.

Again, thank you. Together, we're advancing the common good for all.

Sincerely,

Brian A. Gallagher
President and Chief Executive Officer
United Way Worldwide

Figure 10 - United Way's 2010 CEO Letter (United Way Worldwide, 2010)

These assertions hold true within the three example reports. Each one includes an entire page dedicated to the CEO letter. Within each of these letters, similar language is used and a form seems to arise: Achievements of the past signal successes in the future. Though none of them go into very much detail, they all point to specific programs or numbers for accomplishments within the past year. With regard to the visuals, they are also consistent in showing a picture of the CEO on the same page. This helps to provide a sense that these words come directly from the CEO. In fact, the only way in which the three reports are inconsistent is in their length. While all three are a page long, they vary from three to seven paragraphs.

Habitat for Humanity International • Annual Report 2010

What we build: So much more than houses

Building and repairing homes has always been our identity. In fact, we are very grateful to all those who helped Habitat for Humanity serve almost 75,000 families worldwide last year—almost triple the number of five years ago. But the heart of Habitat is not bricks and sticks. It is the desire to demonstrate the love of Jesus Christ by reaching out to help those in need of a better place to live. When we ask, "What will you build?" there are so many answers, because we build so much more than houses.

I have seen in the eyes of both homeowners and volunteers worldwide how God uses our efforts to transform lives. For families who dared to dream and for individuals who felt no purpose before, Habitat for Humanity builds hope.

The collaboration that was to become a hallmark of the response to the Haiti earthquake began to form because the world wanted to tell the people of Haiti they were not alone. Our disaster response efforts built coalitions to best serve the people of Haiti, and rather than stake out our territory, we built bridges that are allowing us to do more than we could ever do alone. We decided to diverge from our usual method of operation and not bring volunteers into Haiti so that we would not take away much-needed jobs from local families. We made a strategic change to build opportunity for those who needed to earn a wage so they could reclaim their lives.

Thousands of miles away in Macedonia, we are partnering with a microfinance company to help families acquire funds for repairs, reconstruction and renovations of substandard housing. By responding to the needs and abilities of families throughout that country, Habitat for Humanity is building possibilities.

The emphasis on rehabbing and repairing homes and revitalizing neighborhoods in the United States depends on creating local partnerships. By listening to the residents and those who have a vision for restoring once vibrant places to live, we are building community.

Calling upon this spirit of unity, a Singapore-based food and health supplements company urged the public to donate 10,000 empty bottles to be used as filler in laying cement floor foundations for homes in Thailand. This "Hope in a Bottle" campaign built enthusiasm and common purpose.

We will continue to celebrate with each family we serve, and our identity will always be found in efforts to provide safe, decent and affordable housing. God's desire is for so much more. What will you build?

Jonathan T.M. Reckford
CEO, Habitat for Humanity International

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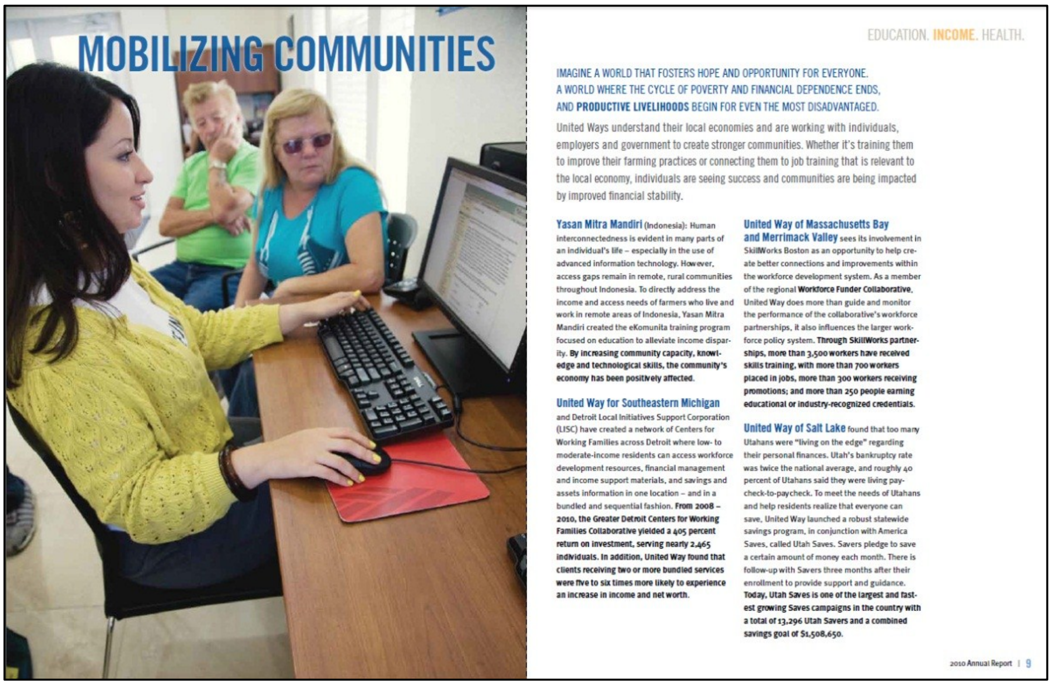
Figure 11 - Habitat for Humanity's 2010 CEO Letter (Habitat for Humanity International, 2010)

The third and often largest section of the annual report, the accomplishments section allows the audience insight into how their money is being used. Here, pictures and narrative combine to illustrate the organization's work from the previous year. This section generally includes interest stories that provide a more personal view of the organization as well as more general narratives that discuss how resources were used to fulfill the mission statement. These success stories assure donors that their money is being used effectively.


MOBILIZING COMMUNITIES

EDUCATION. INCOME. HEALTH.

IMAGINE A WORLD THAT FOSTERS HOPE AND OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE. A WORLD WHERE THE CYCLE OF POVERTY AND FINANCIAL DEPENDENCE ENDS, AND **PRODUCTIVE LIVELIHOODS** BEGIN FOR EVEN THE MOST DISADVANTAGED.

United Ways understand their local economies and are working with individuals, employers and government to create stronger communities. Whether it's training them to improve their farming practices or connecting them to job training that is relevant to the local economy, individuals are seeing success and communities are being impacted by improved financial stability.

Yasan Mitra Mandiri (Indonesia): Human interconnectedness is evident in many parts of an individual's life – especially in the use of advanced information technology. However, access gaps remain in remote, rural communities throughout Indonesia. To directly address the income and access needs of farmers who live and work in remote areas of Indonesia, Yasan Mitra Mandiri created the eKomunita training program focused on education to alleviate income disparity. **By increasing community capacity, knowledge and technological skills, the community's economy has been positively affected.**

United Way for Southeastern Michigan and Detroit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) have created a network of Centers for Working Families across Detroit where low- to moderate-income residents can access workforce development resources, financial management and income support materials, and savings and assets information in one location – and in a bundled and sequential fashion. **From 2008 – 2010, the Greater Detroit Centers for Working Families Collaborative yielded a 405 percent return on investment, serving nearly 2,465 individuals. In addition, United Way found that clients receiving two or more bundled services were five to six times more likely to experience an increase in income and net worth.**

United Way of Massachusetts Bay and Merrimack Valley sees its involvement in SkillWorks Boston as an opportunity to help create better connections and improvements within the workforce development system. As a member of the regional **Workforce Funder Collaborative**, United Way does more than guide and monitor the performance of the collaborative's workforce partnerships, it also influences the larger workforce policy system. **Through SkillWorks partnerships, more than 3,500 workers have received skills training, with more than 700 workers placed in jobs, more than 300 workers receiving promotions; and more than 250 people earning educational or industry-recognized credentials.**

United Way of Salt Lake found that too many Utahans were "living on the edge" regarding their personal finances. Utah's bankruptcy rate was twice the national average, and roughly 40 percent of Utahans said they were living paycheck-to-paycheck. To meet the needs of Utahans and help residents realize that everyone can save, United Way launched a robust statewide savings program, in conjunction with America Saves, called Utah Saves. Savers pledge to save a certain amount of money each month. There is follow-up with Savers three months after their enrollment to provide support and guidance. **Today, Utah Saves is one of the largest and fastest growing Saves campaigns in the country with a total of 13,296 Utah Savers and a combined savings goal of $1,508,650.**

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Figure 12 - One of United Way's 2010 Accomplishment Pages (United Way Worldwide, 2010)

This, in turn, allows these pages to suggest additional ways to help. The American Red Cross, for example, requires volunteers, blood donors and money donors. Each page in the accomplishments section will call for one of these kinds of donations and encourage the reader to make an investment. Since these sections are lighter on financial data than the actual financial section, it allows the organization a little more freedom in their self-presentation. Even if the organization suffered financially, they can make a case that they have been doing their utmost to pursue their mission.

What we *re*build:
Lives after disasters

From experience, Habitat has learned that giving families the tools to rebuild and working alongside them is the best way to improve housing conditions after a disaster.

'I am thirsting for this house'

It takes only a day, and sometimes less than a minute, for the world housing crisis to get much worse.

So it was in Haiti on Jan. 12, 2010, when 190,000 homes were destroyed, leaving 1.5 million homeless in a magnitude-7.0 earthquake. Even before that disaster, too many Haitians were already among the 1.6 billion people who face every day without a decent, affordable place to live. More than 200,000 people died in Haiti in the initial earthquake and 52 aftershocks. Nearly 90 percent of the city of Léogâne, near the earthquake's epicenter, was destroyed.

Rose Flore Charles, 35, and her children—Joverson, 6; Kelvens, 5; and Guallina, 2—were not in their small apartment at 4:53 p.m. when the building collapsed during the earthquake, killing three of their neighbors. Charles created a makeshift shelter mostly of bedsheets, with metal gates propped together to provide a façade of strength. Only a green wire coat hanger held a scrap door tight. Charles' children suffered there.

"Sleeping in the old shelter, the rain always got in," Charles said. "We have to go to the health center and ask for help when their fevers get very bad." But the Charles family now has a dry place to take refuge: a Habitat transitional shelter.

"I am thirsting for this house," Charles said, smiling as she watched the wood-frame transitional shelter being built. She had helped clear debris to make construction possible. The Charles family received one of the first Habitat transitional shelters. More shelters are being built every week.

Habitat's threefold response in Haiti includes relief, rehabilitation and reconstruction with the goal of serving 50,000 families in the next five years.

From experience, Habitat has learned that giving families the tools to rebuild and working alongside them is the best way to improve housing conditions after a disaster. And so, 21,000 emergency shelter kits helped families help themselves. The kits, packed by volunteers in the United States, contained tools, tarps, safety gloves and other items to allow Haitians to make immediate repairs and construct temporary shelters.

Habitat is also at work inside Haiti, making house assessments and repairs, building recyclable transitional shelters along with upgradable transitional shelters that can be expanded into permanent housing, and constructing core houses—small, permanent homes to which rooms can be added over time.

Habitat Resource Centers help deliver Habitat's response in Haiti. These centers provide targeted, community-based housing solutions that assist families along their pathway to permanent housing. The centers employ Haitians who lost their livelihood after the earthquake and offer training in construction skills.

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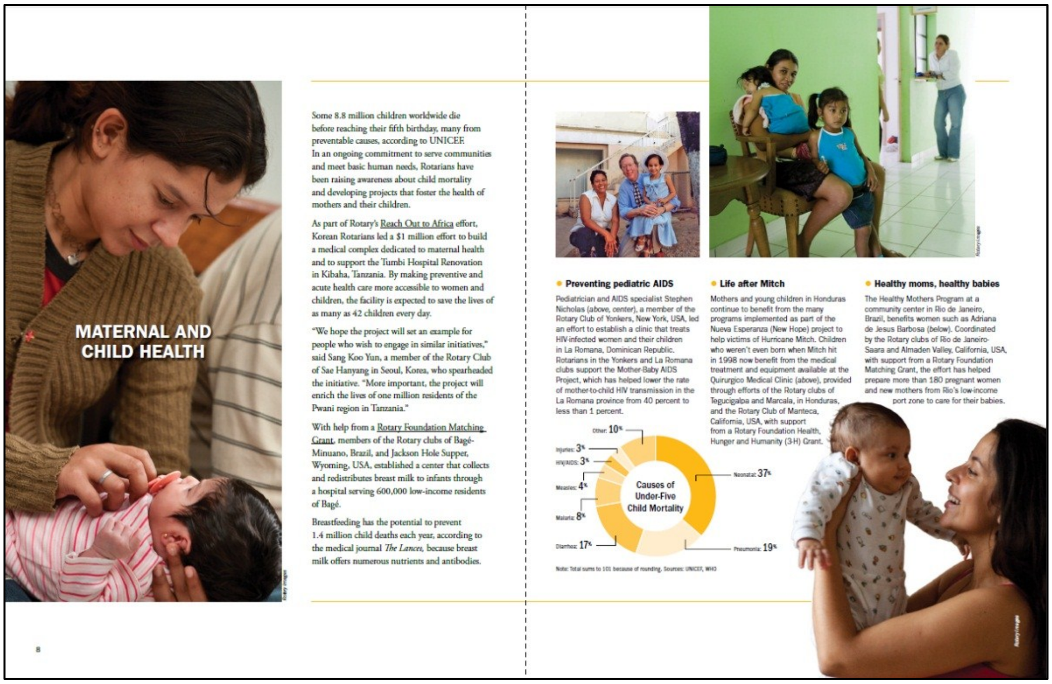
Figure 13 - One of Habitat for Humanity's 2010 Accomplishment Pages (Habitat for Humanity International, 2010)

Since the accomplishments section is the most commonly read, it needs to be easy to read, visually appealing and powerful. Annual reports, such as those from Rotary International, United Way and Habitat for Humanity, tend to use relatively small amounts of text and several large pictures to tout their successes. It is common to see the text arranged very neatly with several different sections or stories. By doing so, the formatting guides a reader's eye to look at information from most to least important (left to right, top to bottom in English). In addition, the pictures, titles and headings all come together to maintain the paratext, carrying the same theme throughout the document. As Davison argues, this paratext can say just as much about the organization as the actual copy (Davison, 2009). Typically, it will correspond with the mission statement, but even if it does not, the theme can link several potentially unrelated topics and help maintain a consistent image of the organization.



MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Some 8.8 million children worldwide die before reaching their fifth birthday, many from preventable causes, according to UNICEF. In an ongoing commitment to serve communities and meet basic human needs, Rotarians have been raising awareness about child mortality and developing projects that foster the health of mothers and their children.

As part of Rotary's Reach Out to Africa effort, Korean Rotarians led a $1 million effort to build a medical complex dedicated to maternal health and to support the Tumbi Hospital Renovation in Kibaha, Tanzania. By making preventive and acute health care more accessible to women and children, the facility is expected to save the lives of as many as 42 children every day.

"We hope the project will set an example for people who wish to engage in similar initiatives," said Sang Koo Yun, a member of the Rotary Club of Sae Hanyang in Seoul, Korea, who spearheaded the initiative. "More important, the project will enrich the lives of one million residents of the Pwani region in Tanzania."

With help from a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant, members of the Rotary clubs of Bagé-Minuano, Brazil, and Jackson Hole Supper, Wyoming, USA, established a center that collects and redistributes breast milk to infants through a hospital serving 600,000 low-income residents of Bagé.

Breastfeeding has the potential to prevent 1.4 million child deaths each year, according to the medical journal *The Lancet*, because breast milk offers numerous nutrients and antibodies.

Preventing pediatric AIDS

Pediatrician and AIDS specialist Stephen Nicholas (*above, center*), a member of the Rotary Club of Yonkers, New York, USA, led an effort to establish a clinic that treats HIV-infected women and their children in La Romana, Dominican Republic. Rotarians in the Yonkers and La Romana clubs support the Mother-Baby AIDS Project, which has helped lower the rate of mother-to-child HIV transmission in the La Romana province from 40 percent to less than 1 percent.

Life after Mitch

Mothers and young children in Honduras continue to benefit from the many programs implemented as part of the Nueva Esperanza (New Hope) project to help victims of Hurricane Mitch. Children who weren't even born when Mitch hit in 1998 now benefit from the medical treatment and equipment available at the Quirurgico Medical Clinic (above), provided through efforts of the Rotary clubs of Tegucigalpa and Marcala, in Honduras, and the Rotary Club of Manteca, California, USA, with support from a Rotary Foundation Health, Hunger and Humanity (3-H) Grant.

Healthy moms, healthy babies

The Healthy Mothers Program at a community center in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, benefits women such as Adriana de Jesus Barbosa (*below*). Coordinated by the Rotary clubs of Rio de Janeiro-Saara and Almaden Valley, California, USA, with support from a Rotary Foundation Matching Grant, the effort has helped prepare more than 180 pregnant women and new mothers from Rio's low-income port zone to care for their babies.

Figure 14 - One of Rotary International's 2010 Accomplishment Pages (Rotary International; The Rotary Foundation, 2010)

In examining these three reports, three primary page-specific techniques are readily apparent: Alignment, subtitles and pictures. All three reports make extensive use of alignment to both separate distinct stories and link them through proximity. This is especially evident within the Rotary International and United Way pages as they both feature a larger paragraph separated from the many smaller paragraphs. In both cases, the larger paragraph includes a more general view of the organization, whereas the smaller paragraphs call to specific cases. This format is carried between pages as well, helping guide the reader through the document. It is clear that each similarly formatted section resembles a piece of a whole. Likewise, the subtitles and subheadings for individual sections and paragraphs correspond with the section theme and make it clear that the information belongs to a specific section, despite the differing subjects of each piece. Finally, the pictures help to solidify the theme for a page. As Maitra and Goswami explain, (American) design includes pictures with directly tied to the literary content on a page (Responses of American readers to visual aspects of a mid-sized Japanese company's annual report: A case study, 1995). In one case, the pictures may help to clarify the page; in another, they may capture a casual reader's attention and allow the text to clarify the pictures.

Despite these strong similarities, there are some major differences among the three annual reports, indicating that there is no single way to design the accomplishments section. For one, Rotary International included two-page spreads dedicated to individual interest stories, with only a title beyond the story itself. These often mark the arrival of a larger shift in focus from one series of sections to another, while subtitles on the individual sections signified the theme for a single two-page spread of both stories and pictures. While both Habitat for Humanity and United Way adopted a full-page picture and subtitle for their sections, these remained facing a page with significantly more text. In another deviation from the apparent standard, Rotary also included detailed charts and graphs within their accomplishment section. United Way and Habitat for Humanity were content to either use these separately or emphasize specific pieces of data within their text.

The financial section is arguably the most important section in the annual report as annual reports are primarily known as financial documents. The first annual report to be released contained only the information necessary to inform stockholders and investors of the financial situation of the company (Myers, 1994). Since then, they have grown to include extra material in an effort to capitalize upon a required document (David, 2001; Graves, Flesher, & Jordan, 1996). As a result, the financial section has also evolved into a way to convince investors with cold, hard numbers. It is now common to explain pieces of financial information, showing its significance and touting the successful use of the organization's funds. Of course, non-profit organizations are not forced to adhere to these rules, but have kept the spirit alive. Instead of publishing an exhaustive listing of profits and sales, they generally emphasize details about revenue and expenses and break these down by specific actions or sources.

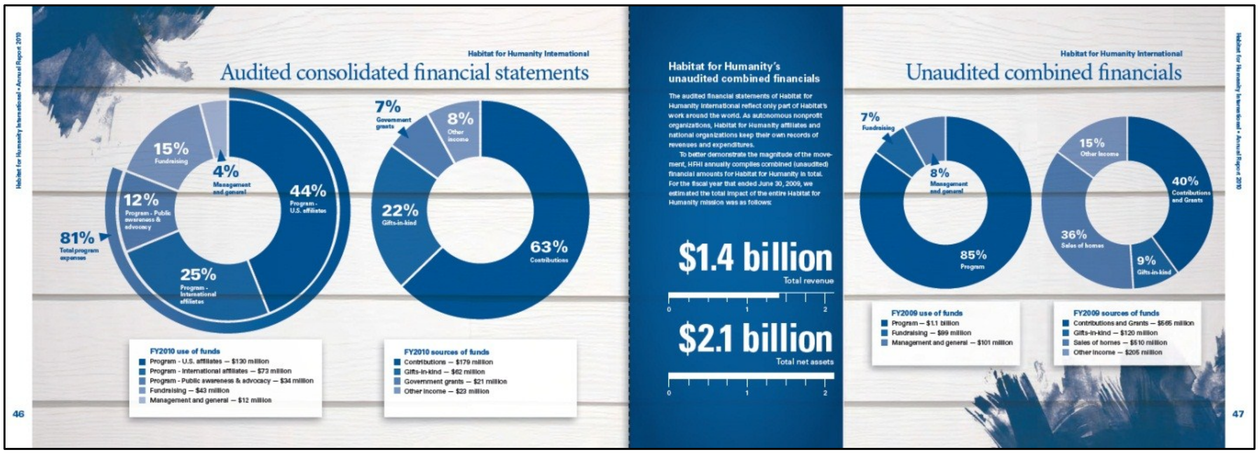
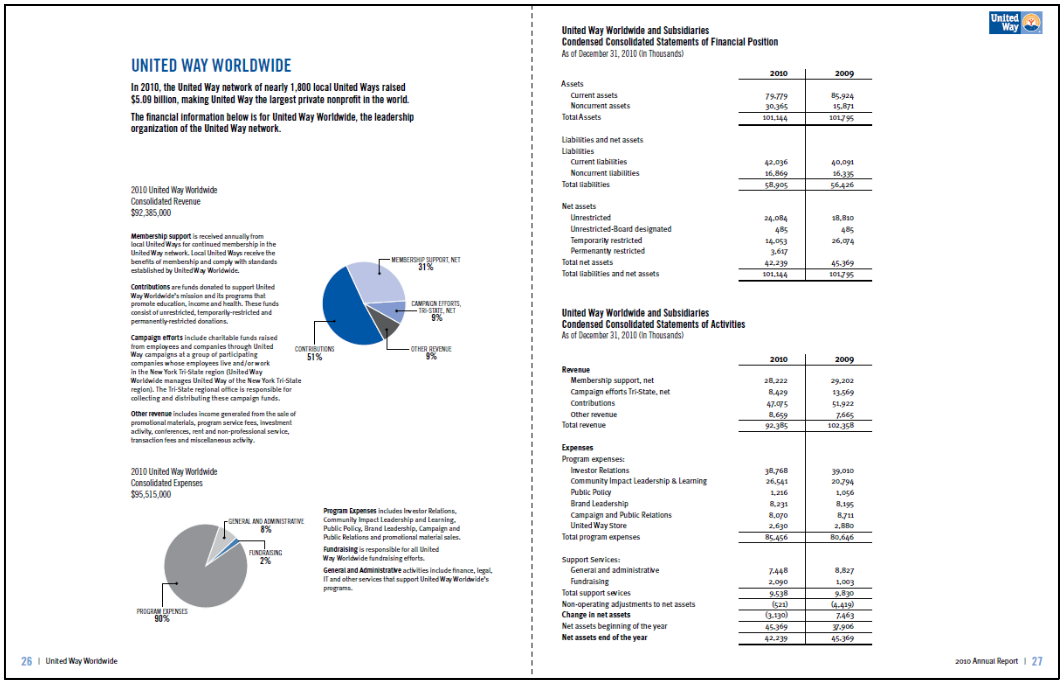


Figure 15 - Habitat for Humanity's 2010 Financial Page (Habitat for Humanity International, 2010)

Since this section is also typically the densest part of the report, it is vitally important to emphasize clarity. It is common to include the required information in chart form on a single, simple page to make the information easily skimmable and draw attention to the accompanying explanation. As a result, the reader will often follow areas of concern to justifications. Charts are also easily comparable, allowing readers to find correlations between finances with ease. Although related charts may have different scales, readers will often compare them regardless. It is important for the organization to recognize this and ensure their explanations account for possible concerns. The focus on the charts is even more apparent in the way the explanations are worded. Without exception, the explanations are very concise and straightforward. Finally, extraneous pictures are absent from the chart page, preventing the reader from becoming distracted.



UNITED WAY WORLDWIDE

In 2010, the United Way network of nearly 1,800 local United Ways raised $5.09 billion, making United Way the largest private nonprofit in the world.

The financial information below is for United Way Worldwide, the leadership organization of the United Way network.

2010 United Way Worldwide
Consolidated Revenue
$92,385,000

Membership support is received annually from local United Ways for continued membership in the United Way network. Local United Ways receive the benefits of membership and comply with standards established by United Way Worldwide.

Contributions are funds donated to support United Way Worldwide's mission and its programs that promote education, income and health. These funds consist of unrestricted, temporarily-restricted and permanently-restricted donations.

Campaign efforts include charitable funds raised from employees and companies through United Way campaigns at a group of participating companies whose employees live and/or work in the New York Tri-State region (United Way Worldwide manages United Way of the New York Tri-State region). The Tri-State regional office is responsible for collecting and distributing these campaign funds.

Other revenue includes income generated from the sale of promotional materials, program service fees, investment activity, conferences, rent and non-professional service, transaction fees and miscellaneous activity.

2010 United Way Worldwide
Consolidated Expenses
$95,515,000

Program Expenses includes Investor Relations, Community Impact Leadership and Learning, Public Policy, Brand Leadership, Campaign and Public Relations and promotional material sales.

Fundraising is responsible for all United Way Worldwide fundraising efforts.

General and Administrative activities include finance, legal, IT and other services that support United Way Worldwide's programs.

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United Way Worldwide and Subsidiaries
Condensed Consolidated Statements of Financial Position
As of December 31, 2010 (In Thousands)

	2010	2009
Assets		
Current assets	79,779	85,924
Noncurrent assets	30,365	15,871
Total Assets	101,144	101,795
Liabilities and net assets		
Liabilities		
Current liabilities	42,036	40,091
Noncurrent liabilities	16,869	16,335
Total liabilities	58,905	56,426
Net assets		
Unrestricted	24,084	18,810
Unrestricted-Board designated	485	485
Temporarily restricted	14,053	26,074
Permenantly restricted	3,617	
Total net assets	42,239	45,369
Total liabilities and net assets	101,144	101,795

United Way Worldwide and Subsidiaries
Condensed Consolidated Statements of Activities
As of December 31, 2010 (In Thousands)

	2010	2009
Revenue		
Membership support, net	28,222	29,202
Campaign efforts Tri-State, net	8,429	13,569
Contributions	47,075	51,922
Other revenue	8,659	7,665
Total revenue	92,385	102,358
Expenses		
Program expenses:		
Investor Relations	38,768	39,010
Community Impact Leadership & Learning	26,541	20,794
Public Policy	1,216	1,056
Brand Leadership	8,231	8,195
Campaign and Public Relations	8,070	8,711
United Way Store	2,630	2,880
Total program expenses	85,456	80,646
Support Services:		
General and administrative	7,448	8,827
Fundraising	2,090	1,003
Total support sevices	9,538	9,830
Non-operating adjustments to net assets	(521)	(4,419)
Change in net assets	(3,130)	7,463
Net assets beginning of the year	45,369	37,906
Net assets end of the year	42,239	45,369

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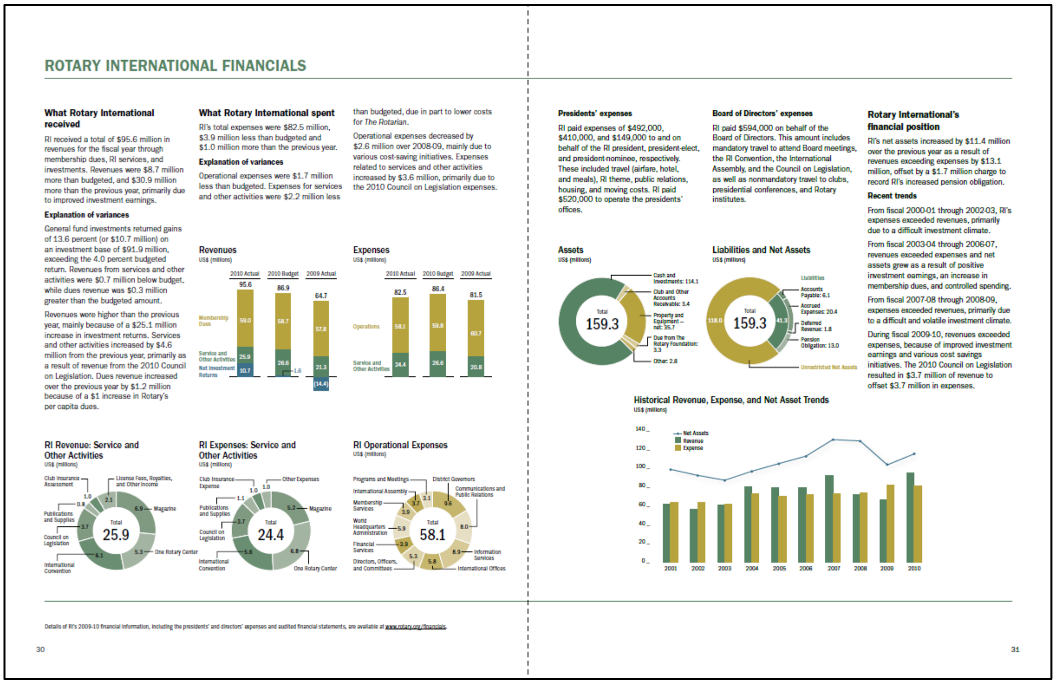
Figure 16 - United Way's 2010 Financial Page (United Way Worldwide, 2010)

In addition to the standard page of graphs and tables, Habitat for Humanity and Rotary International also include a few extra pages of text and graphics, further outlining the financial state of the organization. These pages tend to be more relaxed and allow for the theming and design present elsewhere within the document. The text here is also less focused on specific financial interpretation, instead discussing the general sources of funding or how the organization uses its funding each year. It is here that the organizations clarify exactly how they manage their funds and detail where funds are distributed.



ROTARY INTERNATIONAL FINANCIALS

What Rotary International received

RI received a total of $95.6 million in revenues for the fiscal year through membership dues, RI services, and investments. Revenues were $8.7 million more than budgeted, and $30.9 million more than the previous year, primarily due to improved investment earnings.

Explanation of variances

General fund investments returned gains of 13.6 percent (or $10.7 million) on an investment base of $91.9 million, exceeding the 4.0 percent budgeted return. Revenues from services and other activities were $0.7 million below budget, while dues revenue was $0.3 million greater than the budgeted amount.

Revenues were higher than the previous year, mainly because of a $25.1 million increase in investment returns. Services and other activities increased by $4.6 million from the previous year, primarily as a result of revenue from the 2010 Council on Legislation. Dues revenue increased over the previous year by $1.2 million because of a $1 increase in Rotary's per capita dues.

What Rotary International spent

RI's total expenses were $82.5 million, $3.9 million less than budgeted and $1.0 million more than the previous year.

Explanation of variances

Operational expenses were $1.7 million less than budgeted. Expenses for services and other activities were $2.2 million less than budgeted, due in part to lower costs for *The Rotarian*.

Operational expenses decreased by $2.6 million over 2008-09, mainly due to various cost-saving initiatives. Expenses related to services and other activities increased by $3.6 million, primarily due to the 2010 Council on Legislation expenses.

Presidents' expenses

RI paid expenses of $492,000, $410,000, and $149,000 to and on behalf of the RI president, president-elect, and president-nominee, respectively. These included travel (airfare, hotel, and meals), RI theme, public relations, housing, and moving costs. RI paid $520,000 to operate the presidents' offices.

Board of Directors' expenses

RI paid $594,000 on behalf of the Board of Directors. This amount includes mandatory travel to attend Board meetings, the RI Convention, the International Assembly, and the Council on Legislation, as well as nonmandatory travel to clubs, presidential conferences, and Rotary institutes.

Rotary International's financial position

RI's net assets increased by $11.4 million over the previous year as a result of revenues exceeding expenses by $13.1 million, offset by a $1.7 million charge to record RI's increased pension obligation.

Recent trends

From fiscal 2000-01 through 2002-03, RI's expenses exceeded revenues, primarily due to a difficult investment climate.

From fiscal 2003-04 through 2006-07, revenues exceeded expenses and net assets grew as a result of positive investment earnings, an increase in membership dues, and controlled spending.

From fiscal 2007-08 through 2008-09, expenses exceeded revenues, primarily due to a difficult and volatile investment climate.

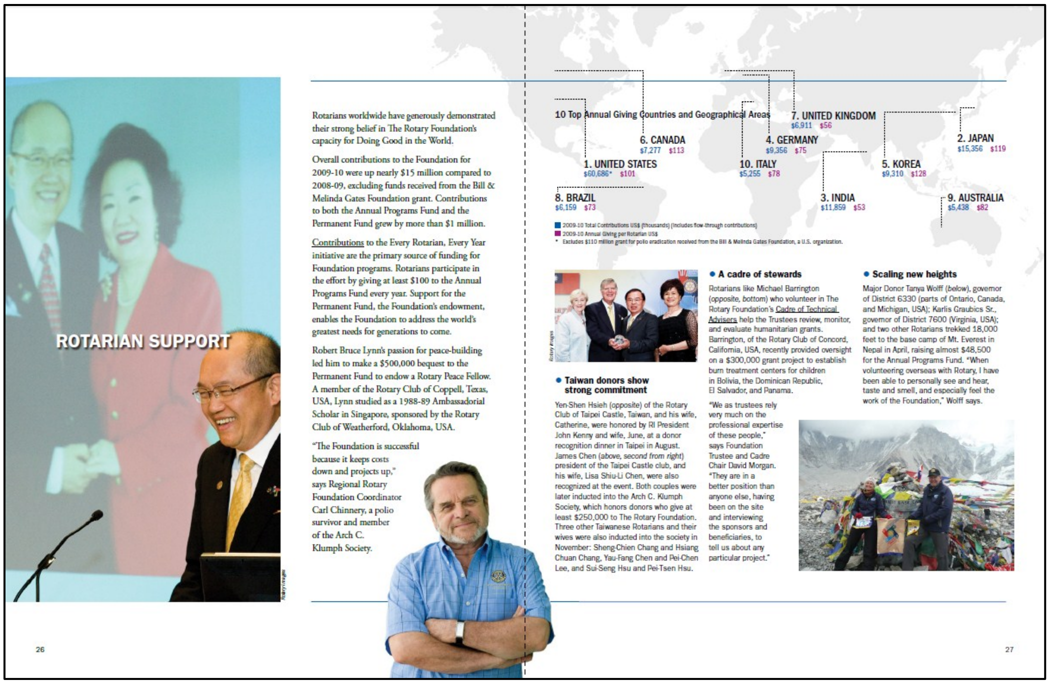
During fiscal 2009-10, revenues exceeded expenses, because of improved investment earnings and various cost savings initiatives. The 2010 Council on Legislation resulted in $3.7 million of revenue to offset $3.7 million in expenses.

Details of RI's 2009-10 financial information, including the presidents' and directors' expenses and audited financial statements, are available at www.rotary.org/financials.

30 31

Figure 17 - Rotary International's 2010 Financial Page (Rotary International; The Rotary Foundation, 2010)

Annual reports are also the perfect place to thank those responsible for the funding presented within the report, both serving as free advertising and acknowledgement for their efforts. Since it is a public document, the donor list ensures that the public knows that these donors are supporting a just cause. It also serves to highlight the help network, as organizations like the American Red Cross rely upon outside services to some degree. By recognizing their assistance, the organization helps to secure their services in the future.



ROTARIAN SUPPORT

Rotarians worldwide have generously demonstrated their strong belief in The Rotary Foundation's capacity for Doing Good in the World.

Overall contributions to the Foundation for 2009-10 were up nearly $15 million compared to 2008-09, excluding funds received from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation grant. Contributions to both the Annual Programs Fund and the Permanent Fund grew by more than $1 million.

Contributions to the Every Rotarian, Every Year initiative are the primary source of funding for Foundation programs. Rotarians participate in the effort by giving at least $100 to the Annual Programs Fund every year. Support for the Permanent Fund, the Foundation's endowment, enables the Foundation to address the world's greatest needs for generations to come.

Robert Bruce Lynn's passion for peace-building led him to make a $500,000 bequest to the Permanent Fund to endow a Rotary Peace Fellow. A member of the Rotary Club of Coppell, Texas, USA, Lynn studied as a 1988-89 Ambassadorial Scholar in Singapore, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Weatherford, Oklahoma, USA.

"The Foundation is successful because it keeps costs down and projects up," says Regional Rotary Foundation Coordinator Carl Chinnery, a polio survivor and member of the Arch C. Klumph Society.

10 Top Annual Giving Countries and Geographical Areas

1. UNITED STATES $60,686* $101
2. JAPAN $15,356 $119
3. INDIA $11,859 $53
4. GERMANY $9,356 $75
5. KOREA $9,310 $128
6. CANADA $7,277 $113
7. UNITED KINGDOM $6,911 $56
8. BRAZIL $6,159 $73
9. AUSTRALIA $5,438 $82
10. ITALY $5,255 $78

2009-10 Total Contributions US$ (thousands) (Includes flow-through contributions)
2009-10 Annual Giving per Rotarian US$
* Excludes $110 million grant for polio eradication received from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, a U.S. organization.

• A cadre of stewards

Rotarians like Michael Barrington (*opposite, bottom*) who volunteer in The Rotary Foundation's Cadre of Technical Advisers help the Trustees review, monitor, and evaluate humanitarian grants. Barrington, of the Rotary Club of Concord, California, USA, recently provided oversight on a $300,000 grant project to establish burn treatment centers for children in Bolivia, the Dominican Republic, El Salvador, and Panama.

"We as trustees rely very much on the professional expertise of these people," says Foundation Trustee and Cadre Chair David Morgan. "They are in a better position than anyone else, having been on the site and interviewing the sponsors and beneficiaries, to tell us about any particular project."

• Scaling new heights

Major Donor Tanya Wolff (*below*), governor of District 6330 (parts of Ontario, Canada, and Michigan, USA); Karlis Graubics Sr., governor of District 7600 (Virginia, USA); and two other Rotarians trekked 18,000 feet to the base camp of Mt. Everest in Nepal in April, raising almost $48,500 for the Annual Programs Fund. "When volunteering overseas with Rotary, I have been able to personally see and hear, taste and smell, and especially feel the work of the Foundation," Wolff says.

• Taiwan donors show strong commitment

Yen-Shen Hsieh (*opposite*) of the Rotary Club of Taipei Castle, Taiwan, and his wife, Catherine, were honored by RI President John Kenny and wife, June, at a donor recognition dinner in Taipei in August. James Chen (*above, second from right*) president of the Taipei Castle club, and his wife, Lisa Shiu-Li Chen, were also recognized at the event. Both couples were later inducted into the Arch C. Klumph Society, which honors donors who give at least $250,000 to The Rotary Foundation. Three other Taiwanese Rotarians and their wives were also inducted into the society in November: Sheng-Chien Chang and Hsiang Chuan Chang, Yau-Fang Chen and Pei-Chen Lee, and Sui-Seng Hsu and Pei-Tsen Hsu.

26

27

Figure 18 - Rotary International's 2010 Donor Credits Page (Rotary International; The Rotary Foundation, 2010)

Surprisingly, donor lists are the most dissimilar sections. It seems that a list of donors at different thresholds is fairly standard, but Rotary International skips it entirely. Instead, Rotary International chooses to include global contributions and uses paragraphs to cite specific contributions. Habitat for Humanity includes these nods to specific donations as well, but United Way does not. There is also a discrepancy in length. Rotary International is content to display only one page of donor credit, but both United Way and Habitat for Humanity use multiple pages. Habitat for Humanity goes for a full three pages, while United Way makes use of two. A final deviance is the placement of the donor pages. Both United Way and Rotary International include them before their financial sections, but Habitat for Humanity leaves them for last. Unfortunately, since donor lists are specific to non-profit annual reports, there is very little research to reconcile these differences.

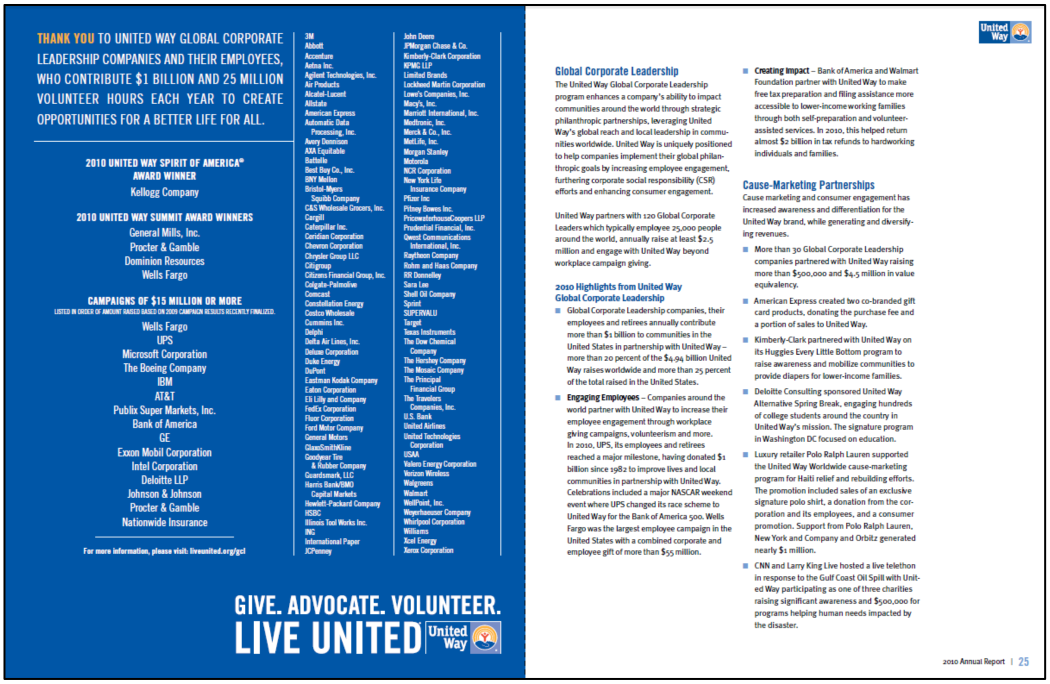


Figure 19 - United Way's 2010 Donor Credits Page (United Way Worldwide, 2010)

Figure 20 - Habitat for Humanity's 2010 Donor Credits Page (Habitat for Humanity International, 2010)

2.5 Conclusion

Overall, non-profit annual reports are complex entities. Although they originated from a mandated document, they have grown to serve many additional purposes for a wide array of audiences. As a genre, they are dynamic, with a specific form and content that is situated in a hybridized language of finance and public relations. The genre is also marked by annual updates and its hybrid structure. Though it is hard to say that annual reports are truly owned by any one community of thought, they are subject to harsh judgment through the public eye. As a form, they feature a specific structure that moves from a Mission Statement and CEO Letter to help establish ethos, into accomplishments that instill confidence into the audience and finally to financial data that helps to solidify the ethos of the document.

This detailed understanding of annual reports serves as a starting point for the development of the American Red Cross's report. Its origins in accountability grant insight into the need for an annual report in non-profit organizations while the definition of its purposes and audiences help to identify the primary goals of its design. The understanding of annual reports as a genre provides boundaries and expectations for the document such that it is not designed entirely from scratch. To take this a step further, formal analysis located features within large-scale non-profit annual reports that have already passed through the design process. Since these reports are from national organizations, it is likely they have already expended a great deal of resources on these features to ensure they are effective components of the annual report. The next chapter shows the end product based off of this preliminary work.

3 Current State of the Regional Report

With an understanding of the formal and generic considerations of an annual report, the project team was able to design a document tailored to a meet the needs of the American Red Cross. This document is presented in full below to allow the reader to experience the product as a whole. It is important to note that the report shown here is the result of rigorous negotiation between multiple stakeholders and authors. Some portions of the report were still under negotiation at the conclusion of the project and are presented at the stage of design most recently approved by the team.

It is also important to note that, during the course of the project, the American Red Cross decided to extend the lifetime of the document to three years, invalidating some of the basic considerations inherent in an annual report. For instance, all data within the document would now need to be averaged or accumulated over several years. In addition, any accomplishments must avoid revealing the age of the document or it may be treated as irrelevant. The primary advantage to extending the document's life is that it somewhat eases the burden of document development and allows the Red Cross to spread the associated costs of printing over a much longer timespan.

Luckily, this new "Regional Report" was still intended to use the model of annual reports and retains many aspects of an annual report's rhetorical situation. The report will still target the same audiences of $1000+ donors and potential volunteers, but is more likely to be read by secondary audiences as well. The purposes for the document also remain much the same, hybridizing financial information and public relations to present a positive image of the American Red Cross. The primary difference is that the financial information is no longer directly associated with a single year and no longer needs to convince readers of a success within a year, but success overall. The resulting product makes use of the genre of annual reports to present qualitative information next to quantitative financial information to capitalize upon the ethos of annual reports and deliver an effective public relations document.

In order to complete this document, there are some major changes still left to be made. To begin with, the Mission Statement page will need to be slightly redesigned to reflect the color and alignment choices made throughout the rest of the report. The Financial and Donor List pages will need significant changes, such as populating them with information. Finally, every page will need to be reviewed for statistical accuracy as well as updated charts and figures. The next chapter provides suggestions on how to revise the individual pages.

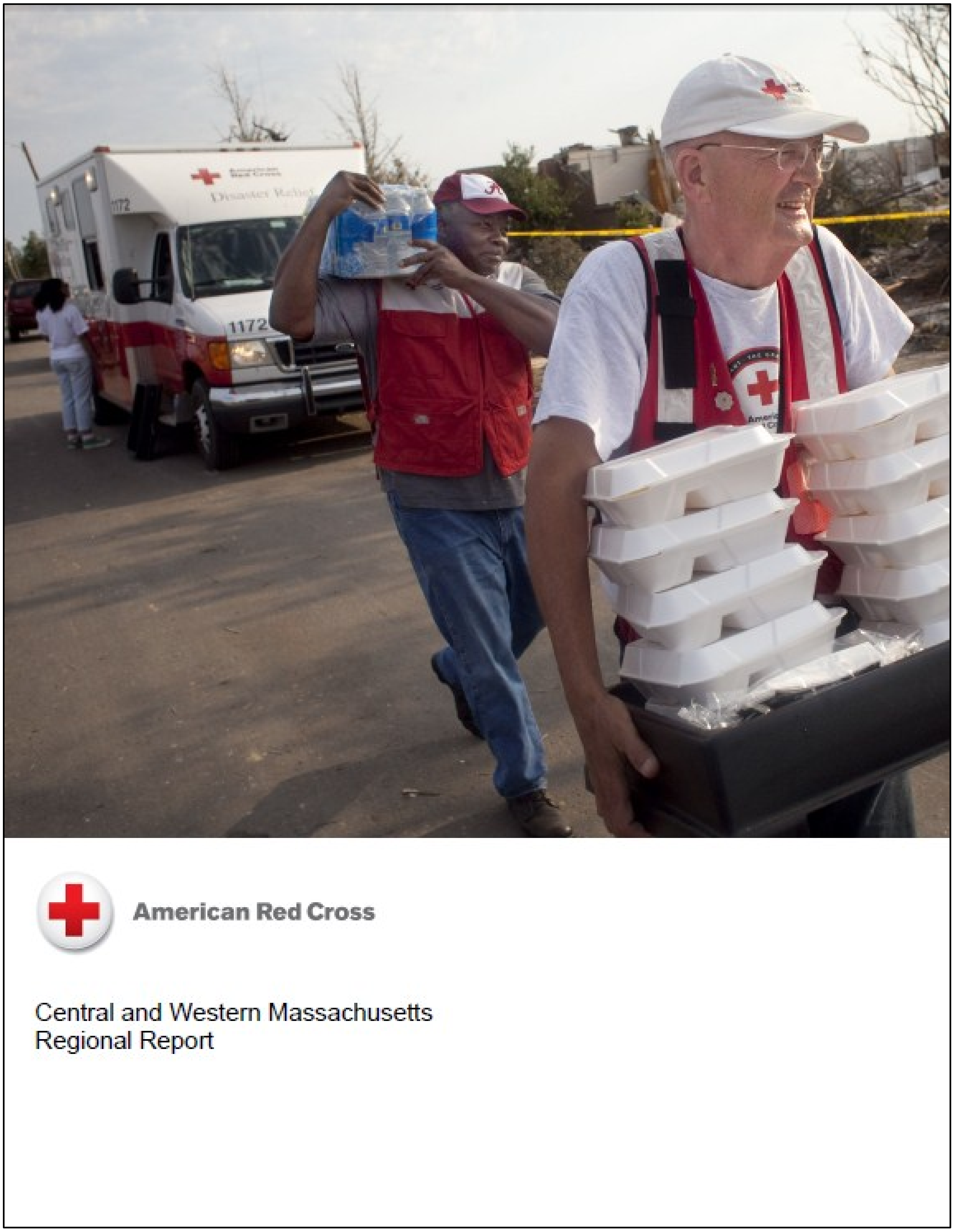
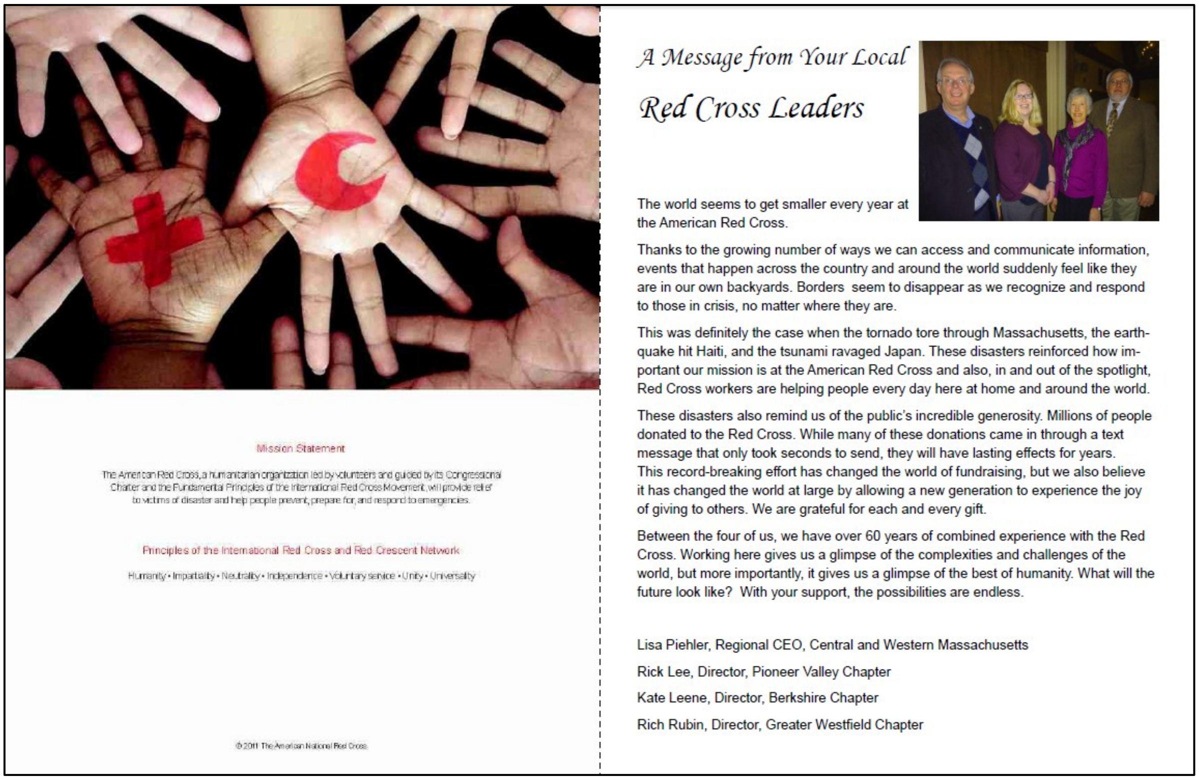


Figure 21 - American Red Cross Regional Report Front Cover



Mission Statement

The American Red Cross, a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement, will provide relief to victims of disaster and help people prevent, prepare for, and respond to emergencies.

Principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Network

Humanity • Impartiality • Neutrality • Independence • Voluntary service • Unity • Universality

© 2011 The American National Red Cross

A Message from Your Local Red Cross Leaders

The world seems to get smaller every year at the American Red Cross.

Thanks to the growing number of ways we can access and communicate information, events that happen across the country and around the world suddenly feel like they are in our own backyards. Borders seem to disappear as we recognize and respond to those in crisis, no matter where they are.

This was definitely the case when the tornado tore through Massachusetts, the earthquake hit Haiti, and the tsunami ravaged Japan. These disasters reinforced how important our mission is at the American Red Cross and also, in and out of the spotlight, Red Cross workers are helping people every day here at home and around the world.

These disasters also remind us of the public's incredible generosity. Millions of people donated to the Red Cross. While many of these donations came in through a text message that only took seconds to send, they will have lasting effects for years. This record-breaking effort has changed the world of fundraising, but we also believe it has changed the world at large by allowing a new generation to experience the joy of giving to others. We are grateful for each and every gift.

Between the four of us, we have over 60 years of combined experience with the Red Cross. Working here gives us a glimpse of the complexities and challenges of the world, but more importantly, it gives us a glimpse of the best of humanity. What will the future look like? With your support, the possibilities are endless.

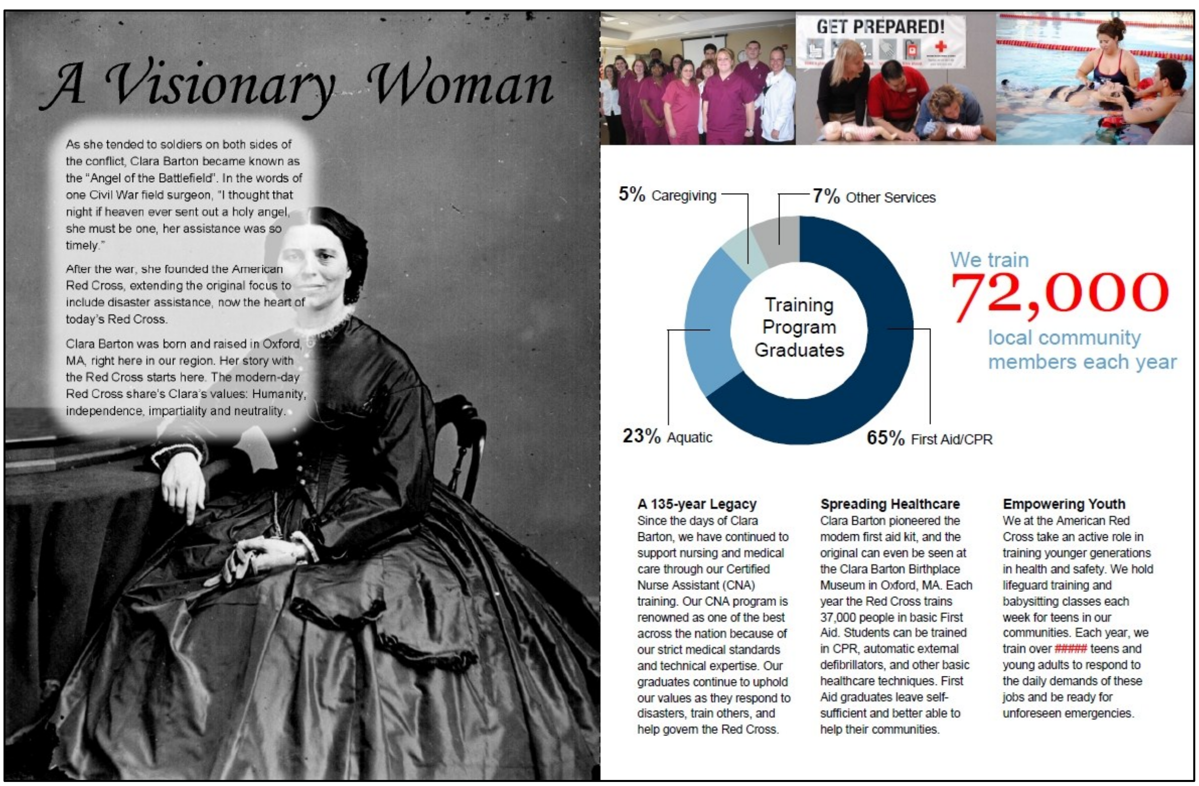
Lisa Piehler, Regional CEO, Central and Western Massachusetts

Rick Lee, Director, Pioneer Valley Chapter

Kate Leene, Director, Berkshire Chapter

Rich Rubin, Director, Greater Westfield Chapter

Figure 22 - American Red Cross Regional Report Mission Statement and CEO Letter



A Visionary Woman

As she tended to soldiers on both sides of the conflict, Clara Barton became known as the "Angel of the Battlefield". In the words of one Civil War field surgeon, "I thought that night if heaven ever sent out a holy angel, she must be one, her assistance was so timely."

After the war, she founded the American Red Cross, extending the original focus to include disaster assistance, now the heart of today's Red Cross.

Clara Barton was born and raised in Oxford, MA, right here in our region. Her story with the Red Cross starts here. The modern-day Red Cross share's Clara's values: Humanity, independence, impartiality and neutrality.

GET PREPARED!

Training Program Graduates

5% Caregiving

7% Other Services

23% Aquatic

65% First Aid/CPR

We train 72,000 local community members each year

A 135-year Legacy
Since the days of Clara Barton, we have continued to support nursing and medical care through our Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) training. Our CNA program is renowned as one of the best across the nation because of our strict medical standards and technical expertise. Our graduates continue to uphold our values as they respond to disasters, train others, and help govern the Red Cross.

Spreading Healthcare
Clara Barton pioneered the modern first aid kit, and the original can even be seen at the Clara Barton Birthplace Museum in Oxford, MA. Each year the Red Cross trains 37,000 people in basic First Aid. Students can be trained in CPR, automatic external defibrillators, and other basic healthcare techniques. First Aid graduates leave self-sufficient and better able to help their communities.

Empowering Youth
We at the American Red Cross take an active role in training younger generations in health and safety. We hold lifeguard training and babysitting classes each week for teens in our communities. Each year, we train over ##### teens and young adults to respond to the daily demands of these jobs and be ready for unforeseen emergencies.

Figure 23 - American Red Cross Regional Report CNA and Training Page

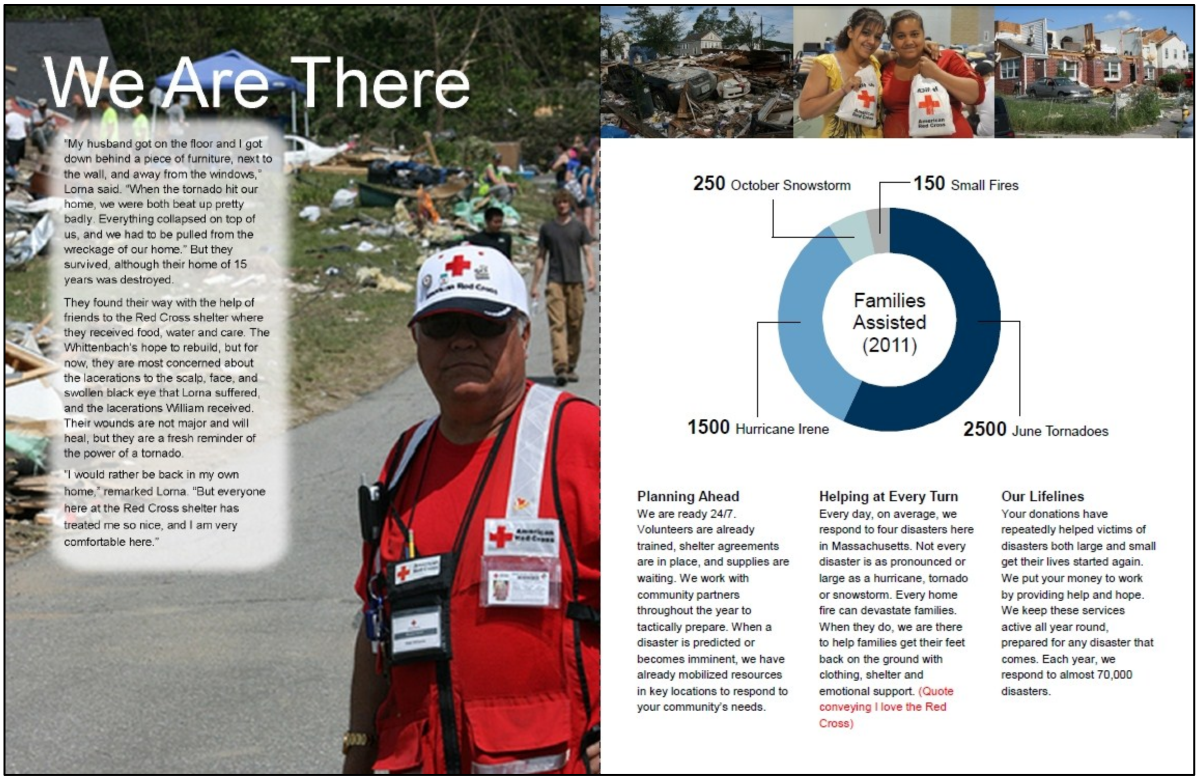


Figure 24 - American Red Cross Regional Report Disaster Response Page

Figure 25 - American Red Cross Regional Report Military Services Page (To be removed.)

Maintaining the Supply

We've all seen them in our communities: White vans parked at job sites, colleges and other locations with a banner saying "Blood Drive Today". These bloodmobiles help run Red Cross blood drives to save lives.

Lindsay Kuchta needed ongoing blood transfusions for four years to keep her strong through chemotherapy. Her parents are thankful for the generosity of people who give their blood to help make Lindsay better, but they always worry about whether there will be an adequate supply.

Damien Kuchta, Lindsays dad, said it best: "I don't know what we'd do if the blood wasn't there. I don't know. What if it's you or what if it's your daughter or your son and they need blood to survive? How would you feel if the blood wasn't there?"

Without these blood drives, people like Lindsay wouldn't be here today. We help to ensure the blood is available and waiting for them.

69,268 units of blood collected in 2010

A Dire Need
Someone receives a blood transfusion from a generous Red Cross donor 21,000 times a day. In fact, one pint of your blood can save three lives. At the same time, a single car accident victim could need up to 100 pints of blood. The American Red Cross continues to be the largest single source of blood in the United States. We provide 43% of the nation's blood supply.

Collecting Hope
In the U.S., there are approximately 9.5 million donors each year. We collect 80% of all our blood donations via mobile blood drives. We set these up at community organizations, companies, high schools, colleges, places of worship, and military installations. We make it easy for you to become someone's hero and save a life.

Give Blood. Give Life.
You can save lives by donating blood. Please call 1-800-GIVE LIFE or visit www.redcross.org to schedule your blood donation appointment. If you have never donated blood, schedule an appointment to donate and you'll see how good it feels to save a life.

Your donation can help many, including accident victims, cancer patients and children with sickle cell anemia.

Figure 26 - American Red Cross Regional Report Blood Services Page

Mayor of the Street

On June 1, 2011, Delores Culp was in West Springfield when she received a call from her youngest son. "Mom, you know how you wanted the trees around the house cut down?" he asked.

Delores soon learned that a tornado had ripped through her street, destroying homes and uprooting trees. When she reached her neighborhood, she found Amanda Street—her street— forever changed. The entire street was unrecognizable, covered with trees and debris. She was devastated. "I just couldn't believe it," said Delores.

The very next day, Delores was both surprised and happy to see the American Red Cross on the street. "The Red Cross came two or three times each day and gave us information on where to go and what to do," said Delores. "They gave us food, water, ice, tarps, a smile and a pleasant word."

Affectionately known as "The Mayor of Amanda Street", Delores was dedicated to making sure her neighbors were safe and had everything they needed following the tornado. Today, she continues to display the same level of dedication and compassion as a new member of the Red Cross Disaster Action Team.

43 volunteers for every staff member

Heart of the Red Cross
The American Red Cross relies upon its volunteers to be prepared for any kind of disaster. Whether raising money to help us prepare for a future disaster, providing services year-round, or responding directly to a disaster, we count upon our members. Volunteers are the heart of the Red Cross. Our volunteers are dedicated to prevention and disaster avoidance.

Heroes, Inside and Out
2600 people donate their time to our region of the American Red Cross each year. We train all of our volunteers in-house, employing the experience we've gained over our more than a century of experience. Our training is free of charge. Volunteers often use their newly learned Red Cross skills in their everyday lives.

The Strength of a Dollar
Our high volunteer-to-staff ratio allows us to ensure that your donations are used responsibly to directly assist disaster victims, military families and students in lifesaving classes. In fact, 92 cents of every dollar goes to direct services; a very efficient and effective use of your gift.

Figure 27 - American Red Cross Regional Report Volunteer Page

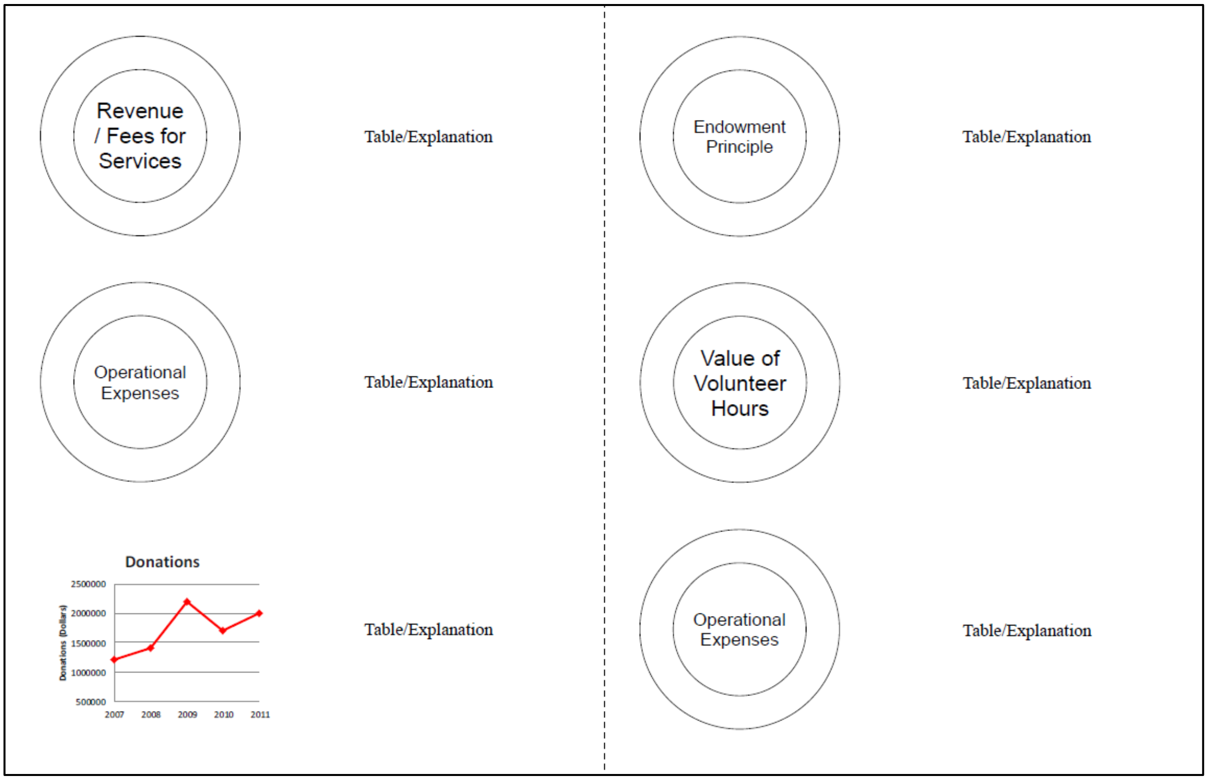


Figure 28 - American Red Cross Regional Report Financial Page

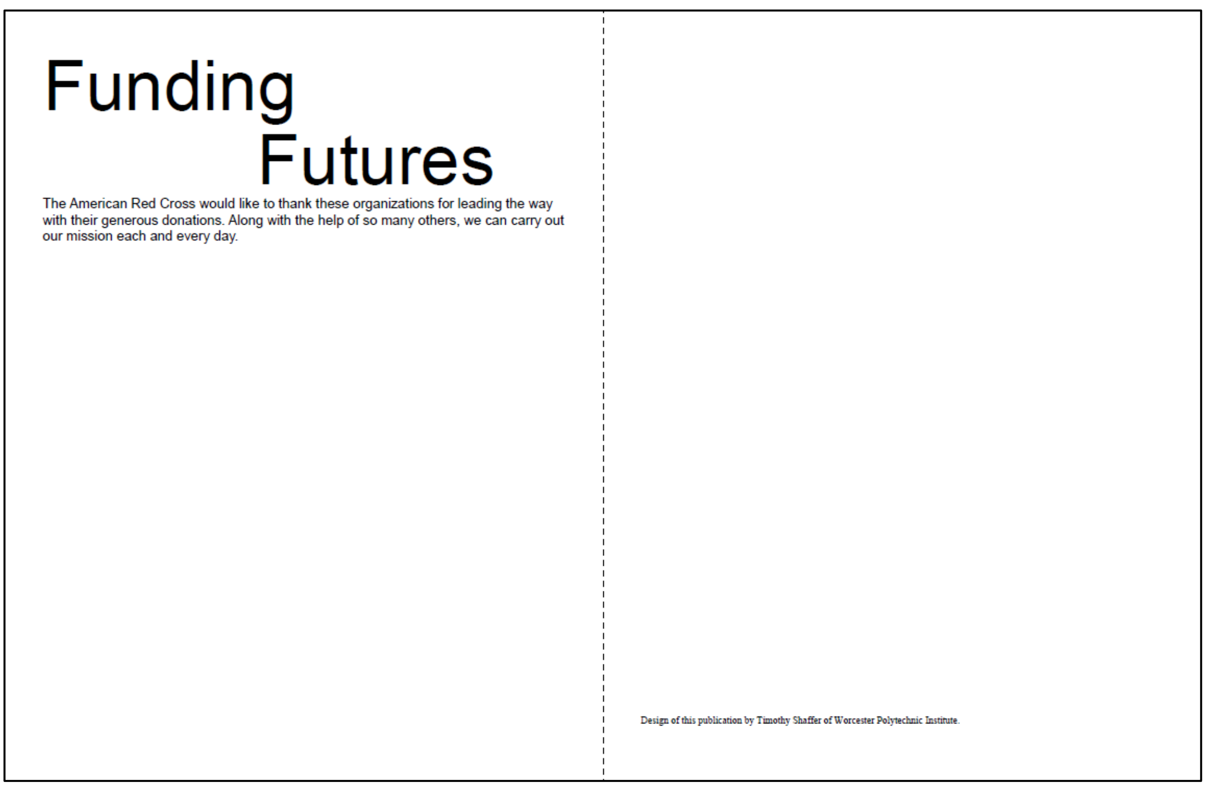


Figure 29 - American Red Cross Regional Report Donor Page

A young disaster victim, rescued from the Springfield tornadoes, checks her care kit with pleasure. Inside, she finds a toothbrush, soap, and shampoo. Such gifts help her family cope and rebuild. The American Red Cross was there to give her and her family everything she needed for a new start.

American Red Cross

Central and Western Massachusetts Chapter
2000 Century Drive
Worcester, MA 01606 USA

Berkshire County Chapter
480 West Street
Pittsfield, MA 01201 USA

Greater Westfield Chapter
48 Broad St.
Westfield, MA 01085 USA

Springfield Chapter
506 Cottage St.
Springfield, MA 01104 USA

Figure 30 - American Red Cross Regional Report Back Cover

4 Discussion on Creating the Annual Report and Negotiating Content with Multiple Stakeholders

While there is no one way to design an annual report, research pointed to common themes among annual reports from major organizations that can be applied to most annual reports. This project aimed to take advantage of these themes to develop a compelling report that could be used by the American Red Cross of Central and Western Massachusetts for a span of several years. The final product is a report that utilizes techniques identified through research and that have been customized through collaborative effort for the Red Cross to suit their needs.

The negotiations between contributors to the report helped tailor the content to deliver a specific message. In some cases, these negotiations involved deciding whether or not to include entire sections. These cases will be covered individually within their own subsection in this chapter, but there were also some issues that persisted throughout the report. Of these, statistical information was constantly a point of difficulty. The primary problem that arose was the capability of the Red Cross to provide information. For example, as a volunteer organization with members that are on-call, the Red Cross does not necessarily have the infrastructure in place to collect information about volunteer hours. In addition, the merger was recent enough to where much of the existing data was still chapter-dependent.

4.1 Cover

Due to the consistency between other non-profit reports, it felt mandatory to make use of a very simple cover. As seen in Figure 31 Proposed Regional Report Front Cover, the cover makes use of three techniques common to the other annual reports. In particular, area (1) showcases Red Cross volunteers smiling as they go about their jobs. This helps to put a face on the organization and humanize it. It also sends a positive message that the Red Cross helps make people happy and is there in times of need. Area (2), on the other hand, is the simple, but necessary logo and label for the Regional Report. The simplicity ensures it does not distract from the image, but also clearly credits the organization. The spacing is somewhat unusual due to strict brand guidelines for use of the logo. Finally, area (3) showcases an additional benefit to this specific photo: The extra branding presented on the truck is fairly clear and helps to establish the authenticity of the report. Without needing to look any further than the picture itself, a reader can quickly understand who published the document.

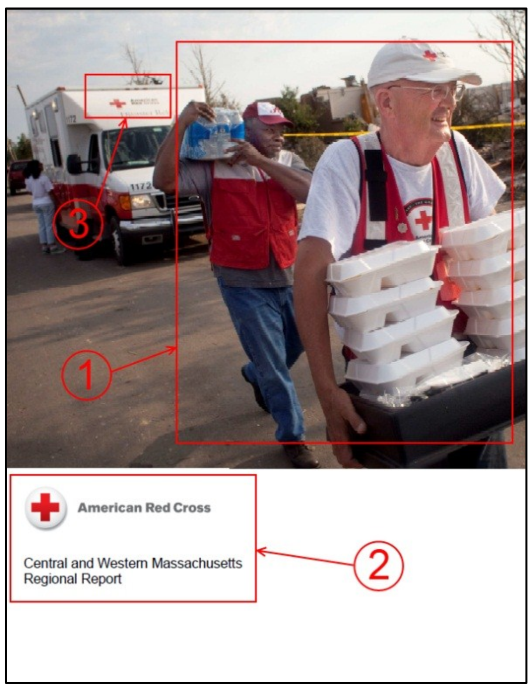


Figure 31 - Proposed Regional Report Front Cover

To arrive at this finalized front cover, the project team went through several drafts and negotiations. One of the early concepts, seen in Figure 31 – Preliminary Front Cover, followed all of the design considerations of the final front cover, but had some major setbacks: First, the logo and title needed to be kept within a small box to cover as little of the photo as possible. Unfortunately, it was impossible to place the box anywhere without covering a significant portion of the child. Another concern raised in negotiation was the fact that the picture featured a child. The Red Cross did not want to be seen as using children simple for promotional purposes.

Figure 32 – Preliminary Front Cover

The back cover is also follows the simple model of the sample annual reports, but with an added concern due to the new regional structure. Since a single office is now responsible for distributing the report to four different chapters, it is possible that fewer copies will be distributed. This makes it very important that the cover be interesting enough to entice a reader when they have an opportunity to read it. Area (1) within Figure 33 – Proposed Regional Report Back Cover is intended to do just that with a small inset picture and personal interest story. In addition, if the report is to be seen as a representation of all four chapters, it should also include contact information for each of them. This presents a challenge as more space on the back cover is consumed and limits the simple look. Through careful alignment, however, area (2) presents both the contact information and links with the front cover's white bar to create a visual connection around the document.

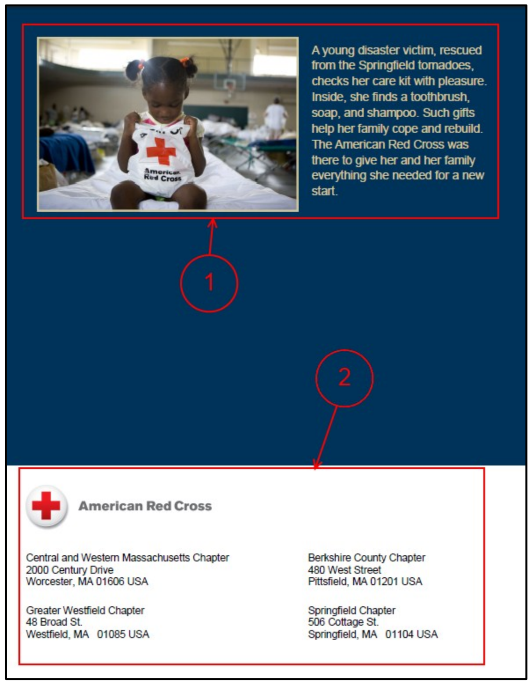


Figure 33 - Proposed Regional Report Back Cover

One difficulty with this design was the choice of picture. There were two primary concerns: First, the child was not from the region. Second, United States law does not allow the dissemination of a child's information without a parent's consent. Combined, these factors made it difficult to write a description for the picture. In the end, it was determined that the focus of the paragraph would be redirected to her family and the care kit she was opening.

4.2 Mission Statement

The Red Cross, of course, has had a standard mission statement since its inception, as dictated by their congressional charter. As a result, it would be surprising and perhaps concerning to the audience if it were absent. The question becomes how to design the page around the mission statement. By looking to the sample reports, it would seem that the design should include an attempt to humanize the organization and emphasize its impact on the world.

Figure 34 – Proposed Red Cross Mission Statement Page shows the American Red Cross's national organization's suggestion for a mission statement page. The design of this page features a simple design that draws the reader's attention to the large picture of children's hands. Not only do the hands help to humanize the organization, the use of both the Red Cross and Red Crescent logos among a multicultural set of hands speaks to the global nature of the organization. As this page was designed at the national level, it requires some minor modifications to bring it into line with the other proposed sections. The most obvious changes would occur in terms of alignment and color scheme. Apart from those, it would be necessary to ensure consistency between heading styles within the existing sections and this page.

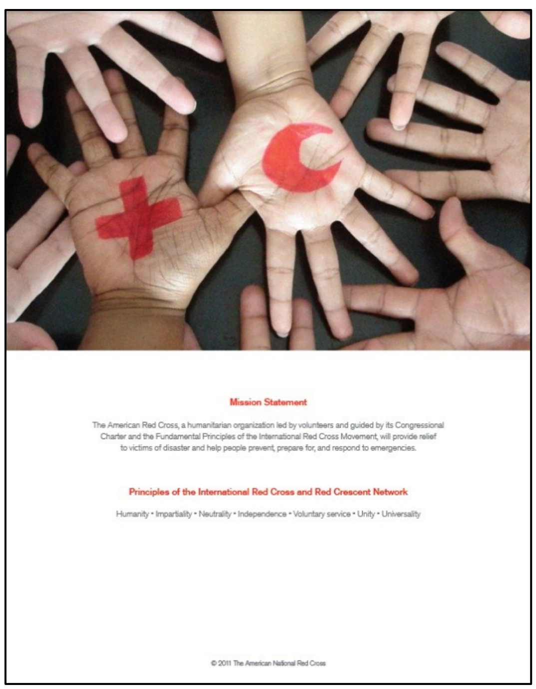


Figure 34 - Proposed Red Cross Mission Statement Page

Before this mission statement page was chosen as the final design, the alternative in Figure 35 – Alternative Mission Statement Page was developed. The concept was similar in that it aimed at humanizing the organization through the children's drawings, but also represented the

Red Cross through their clients' eyes. Despite this, the design was not chosen due to the somewhat unnatural position of the mission statement as a result of the disorganized state of the drawings. The Red Cross representatives believed a more polished, serious look was more befitting of their mission statement.

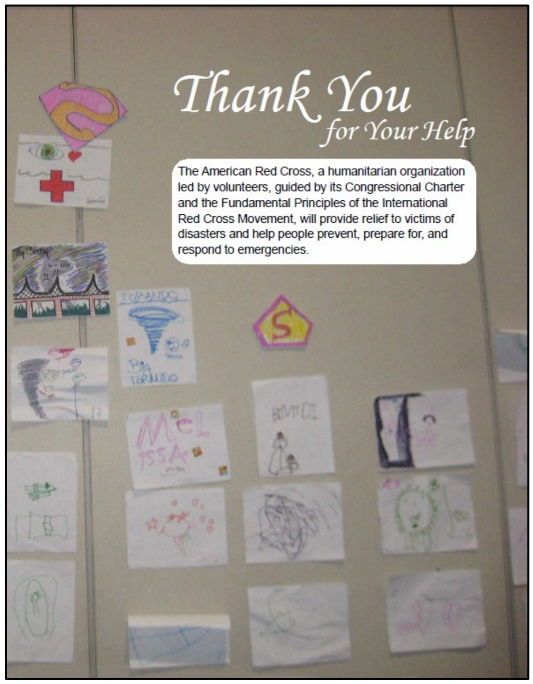
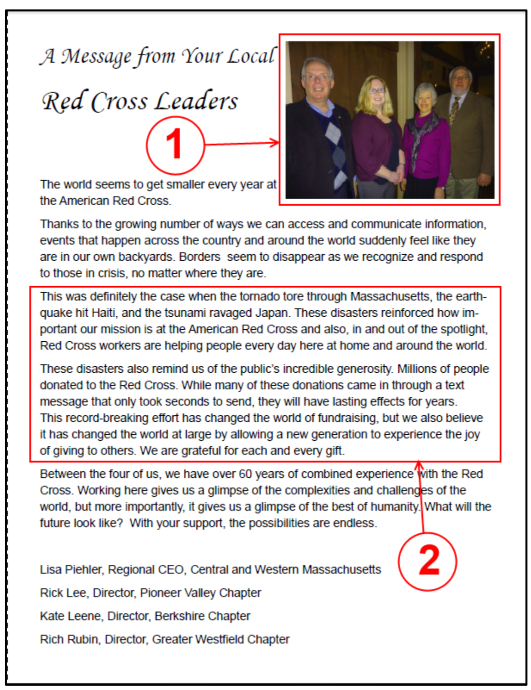


Figure 35 - Alternative Mission Statement Page

4.3 CEO Letter

The widespread use of CEO letters in the sample annual reports suggest that a CEO letter would be vitally important for the Red Cross annual report. In order to properly establish an authoritative ethos within the report, it must include a picture of the CEO as well as discuss accomplishments and lead into plans for the future. The dissimilarities found in the sample reports between lengths of the letter also seem to indicate that CEOs should feel free to write as much or as little as they need. If nothing else, this encourages the audience that the letter is genuine. Finally, since the Red Cross has moved to a regional structure, it is vitally important that the CEO letter represent the thoughts of every chapter in the region. The four names at the bottom of the letter not only serve as a credit, but as an assurance that the directors (formerly chapter CEOs) are able to work together.

Initially, there were a few major concerns regarding the CEO letter. The root problem was that the CEO letter needed to incorporate ideas from all four directors. This presented many smaller problems. Among these, a primary issue was that each director (excluding the CEO) is actually a volunteer. As such, it was difficult to get the four to draft a letter together. Originally, this problem was intended to be solved with individual statements from each director, but this went against the idea of a unified regional structure. Another issue was that it was difficult to get a picture of all four directors together as they were infrequently in the same place. In the end, it became much easier to have Janet Warren write the CEO letter and seek approval from each of the four directors. The photo was taken somewhat serendipitously at an event in December.



A Message from Your Local Red Cross Leaders

1

The world seems to get smaller every year at the American Red Cross.

Thanks to the growing number of ways we can access and communicate information, events that happen across the country and around the world suddenly feel like they are in our own backyards. Borders seem to disappear as we recognize and respond to those in crisis, no matter where they are.

This was definitely the case when the tornado tore through Massachusetts, the earthquake hit Haiti, and the tsunami ravaged Japan. These disasters reinforced how important our mission is at the American Red Cross and also, in and out of the spotlight, Red Cross workers are helping people every day here at home and around the world.

These disasters also remind us of the public's incredible generosity. Millions of people donated to the Red Cross. While many of these donations came in through a text message that only took seconds to send, they will have lasting effects for years. This record-breaking effort has changed the world of fundraising, but we also believe it has changed the world at large by allowing a new generation to experience the joy of giving to others. We are grateful for each and every gift.

Between the four of us, we have over 60 years of combined experience with the Red Cross. Working here gives us a glimpse of the complexities and challenges of the world, but more importantly, it gives us a glimpse of the best of humanity. What will the future look like? With your support, the possibilities are endless.

2

Lisa Piehler, Regional CEO, Central and Western Massachusetts
Rick Lee, Director, Pioneer Valley Chapter
Kate Leene, Director, Berkshire Chapter
Rich Rubin, Director, Greater Westfield Chapter

Figure 36 - Proposed Red Cross CEO Letter

Figure 36 – Proposed Red Cross CEO Letter shows a simple design that is in line with the businesslike model of the sample annual reports. This straightforward style keeps the letter serious and authoritative. At the same time, however, the sample reports included a picture of the CEOs in an attempt to put a face to the message. Logically, the Red Cross should be no different; thus a photo has been included in area (1). The other strong correlation between the sample annual reports indicated a need for the CEO to address both current accomplishments and future plans. Area (2) highlights these important features of the CEO letter, placed directly in the main body of the letter.

4.3 Accomplishments

While the actual content of the accomplishments section is highly varied, the sample reports provided key design elements to be carried throughout the entire section in order to maintain a cohesive image of the organization. Since the American Red Cross is made up of several different branches of service, it made sense to devote an entire section to each one. Like the sample reports, each section would then develop its own theme to work into the greater idea of the document. Area (1) of Figure 37 – First Proposed Red Cross Accomplishment Page displays a Clara Barton theme to capitalize upon the organization's rich history and its long-standing tradition for caregiving as well as the region's proximity to Clara Barton's birthplace. The picture used is the famous picture of Clara Barton from 1866, but it was necessary to edit out a clock on the table to her left. Due to the black and white of the photo, it made it difficult to read the interest story. Areas (2) and (3) cite current statistics to keep the tradition of Clara Barton relevant to the modern age. As the audience is likely looking at this report for an update as to how well the Red Cross is doing in their programs, this current information is foregrounded and emphasized.

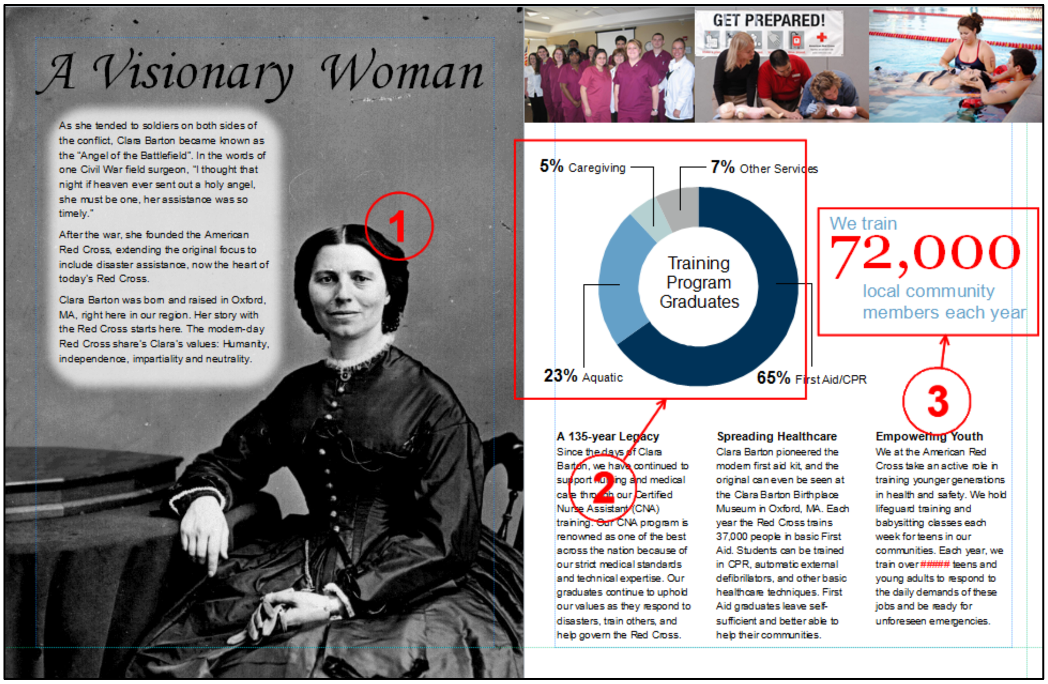


Figure 37 - First Proposed Red Cross Accomplishment Page

In addition to these section-specific design choices, the sample reports also indicated a need for a consistent paratext throughout the document. Techniques such as alignment and repetition can pull a document together and make otherwise unrelated topics link to one another. Figure 38 – Proposed Red Cross Blood Services Page shows various areas that are common to each subsection of the accomplishments pages. In area (1), large titles are used to identify the start of a new section as well as what branch of service the section relates to. Area (2) relates to this by including a personal interest story from the specific branch of service. These stories allow for an example to be applied to the more general goals of the branch. Next, area (3) keeps a consistent series of human images related to the theme of each subsection. In the same way as the human pictures elsewhere in the report, these serve as a way to make the organization's activity relatable. Much like the information in the first three areas, the type of information area (4) remains constant. Since a reader's eye moves downward on a page, it makes sense to include any information that the organization wants to highlight as far up the page as possible. By placing such information in exactly the same place on each page, the report becomes easily skimmable.

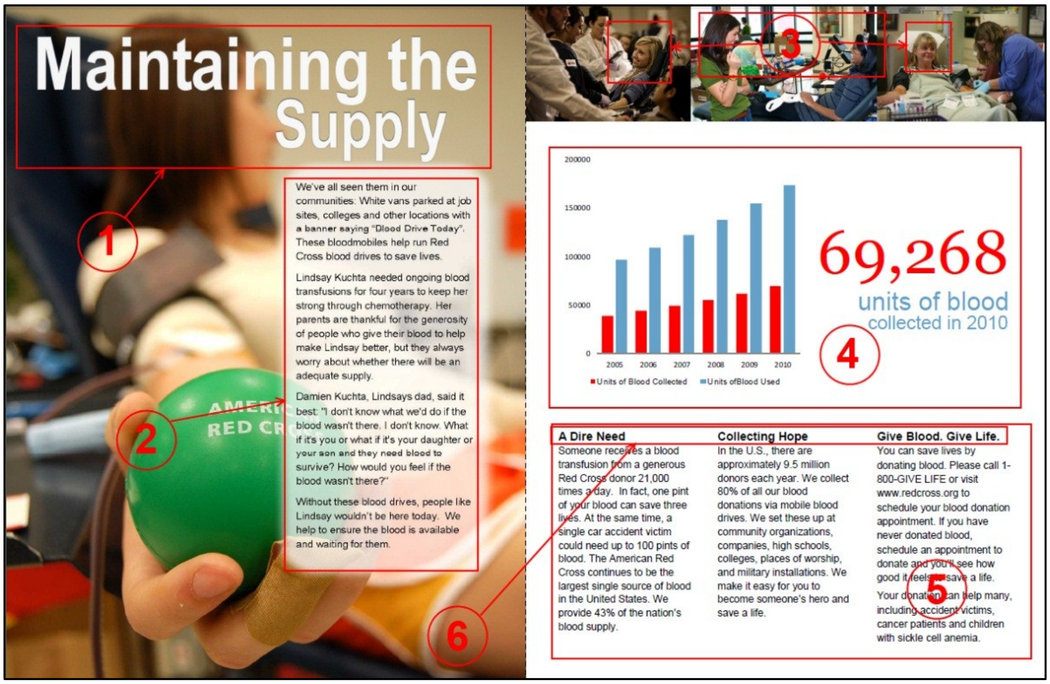


Figure 38 - Proposed Red Cross Blood Services Page

By comparing Figures 37 and 38, a clear formatting pattern also appears within the text. Alignment, font and color are all kept constant within area (5) throughout each page to create a clear connection between branches of service. Within this area, are the subtitles indicated by area (6). These subtitles also connect ideas both within and without a specific section. Within, they preface each paragraph with its topic. Without, they coordinate various themes and values within the organization.

A Unique Service

The chaos and confusion that accompany war and disaster can separate families when they need each other most.

When this happens, American Red Cross is there.

Our regional chapters, like the many across the U.S., work every day with our Red Cross and Red Crescent partners around the world to restore family links. Messages can be very brief, but the three short words "I am alive" may be all that is needed to ease the minds of distraught relatives half a world away. We've successfully linked local clients with their family members in other countries, including those in refugee camps and detention centers.

With the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement comprising of more than 97 million staff in 185 countries, our ability to reconnect families is powerful.

1

We reconnected 4200 families across the world

Delivering Hope
As the United States armed continues to serve overseas, the American Red Cross has expanded its services to military families. These are three of the services we provide are:

- Deliver urgent news about family members
- Reunite families who have been separated by war
- Provide financial support and counseling

The Red Cross is not bound by borders.

A Web of Connections
The Central and Western Massachusetts (Pioneer Valley Chapter) region is proud to host one of the four national call centers for our military family relief services. To serve the men and women who fight for our country, this center utilizes a vast web of information that enables us to locate family members and loved ones, helping them to keep them in touch across the world.

Bridging the World
This past year, the American Red Cross helped reconnect more than 4,200 families – bridging years of separation to renew critical links between new communities in the U.S. and their families around the world. Through these simple gestures, we make life just a little more bearable for both our soldiers and their families.

Figure 39 - Unsuccessful Accomplishments Page

Not every page created for the annual report made the cut. Figure 39 – Unsuccessful Accomplishments Page is one such page. This page was designed to bridge two smaller services of the Red Cross: Services to military families and refugee services. While this seemed reasonable when the concept was first proposed, it proved too difficult to put into practice. Not only did the military services message conflict somewhat with the refugee services message, the regional chapter actually has relatively little to do with the services. The national organization manages the individual cases and runs correspondence through a few major centers. Springfield hosts one of these centers, but much of the actual international work is performed at the national level. On a completely different level, the picture chosen for the page had to be edited in area (1) to hide the dog's open mouth, a potentially frightening image. While the edit looked passable on a computer screen, the project team did not want to run the risk of the edit becoming obvious after printing.

4.4 Financials

As was evidenced by the sample reports, the Red Cross report should adopt a simple, no-nonsense design for its financial section. Visuals like charts and graphs can help to show trends in a quick and easy way, while more detailed explanations (that would be presented in area (2) of Figure 40 – Red Cross Financial Mock-Up) shoulder the load of reconciling the data. Despite the trend of multiple page financial sections, the Regional Report should only need a single page. Since it is not intended to represent the national or international organization's funding, it is unnecessary to distinguish specific contributions with explanations, but it would be wise to provide explanations for the charts due to the varied audience of the Regional Report.

In addition to the basic design considerations, the Regional Report faces a few extra challenges to accountability due to its three-year lifespan. While the report will not be subject to any laws, its audience may hold the organization accountable for any information it publishes. Any financial data should be averaged to avoid the issue of presenting a date that indicates the information could no longer be valid and the average may actually model future years accurately. In addition to this, the averaged data may be included on one chart, instead of several. This serves to keep the section clean and clear-cut. Figure 40 – Red Cross Financial Mock-Up shows one method for accomplishing this in area (1), but a final product was not developed due to a lack of actual information available during the time of this project.

Figure 40 – Red Cross Financial Mock-Up also features a chart for volunteer contributions in area (3) that may prove powerful within a non-profit organization's annual report. Only the Rotary International featured a similar chart that documented their number of

members, but the Red Cross relies heavily upon volunteers for disaster response. As such, volunteers are a resource that cannot be ignored. The question becomes how best to capture their value. Various options were discussed, such as the monetary value of an hour of a volunteer's work or the cumulative amount of volunteer time spent for the Red Cross, but this choice would be limited by the available information.

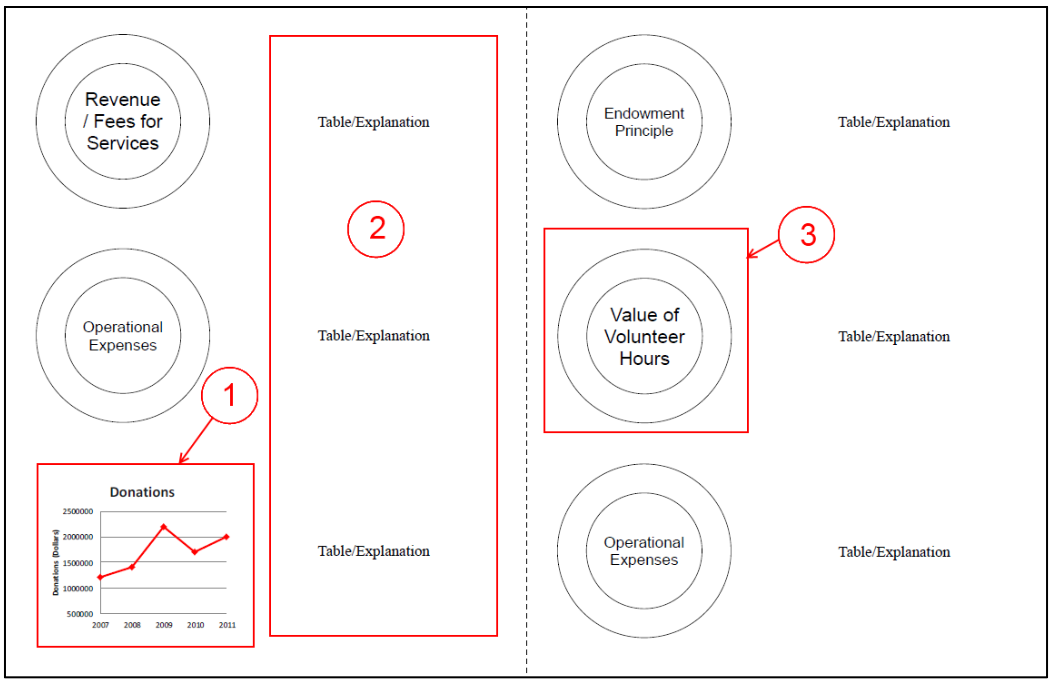


Figure 40 - Red Cross Financial Mock-Up

4.5 Donor List

The design of the donor list is perhaps least challenging of all the sections, but is the subject of much high-level debate. If included at all, it was clear that the standard design was a simple list in alphabetical order, categorized by specific donation thresholds. Where this became complicated was where each threshold would be set and who to include on the list. These seemingly simple choices were extremely controversial due to the potential implications of leaving a donor off the list. A donor that does not make the list may not be inclined to donate again as their contributions were not recognized. At the same time, the more donors that are included, the longer the annual report becomes. In the past, chapter-level annual reports had included every donor, by name, above a certain threshold. This list was frequently two pages long, even at such a local level; at a regional level, the same threshold would take at least four times as many pages.

During the course of the project, the donor list remained a difficult topic. At the onset of the project, it was originally assumed that a donor list would be included as it had been seen as a staple of the annual report in the past. As the team began discussing what choices would need to be made in actually creating this list and the complexity of it sank in, the question of whether or not to include the list surfaced. There were two primary rationales: On one hand, if the report were not to have a donor list, it would save both time and the cost to print the extra pages. In addition, it would avoid the delicate issue of which donors to include on the list. On the other hand, including a donor list both recognizes their contributions and encourages them to keep donating. It is also possible that the donors represented in the list may be drawn into reading the annual report simply due to their name appearing within it. Eventually, we determined that it would be a mistake not to include a donor list as the added effort and cost was insignificant compared to the risk of losing donors. As a result of this long debate, the final list of donors was not prepared for the report until the end of the project and will need to be implemented by a volunteer.

5 Conclusion

The design of an annual report is subject to many considerations, both within and without the design itself. Internal considerations such as structure, form and genre features are fairly well documented and identifiable through conventional literary analysis. Despite this, the greatest difficulties encountered in this project were the external influences on the document. The impact of external events and available technologies affected the development of the report at every step of the process. Currently, there is no simple way of analyzing these important factors of document design.

While the experiences from this project are limited to a single non-profit organization, the impact that external influences have on a document may warrant further investigation. Natural disasters such as Hurricane Irene, the 2011 October snowstorm and the 2011 Springfield tornadoes all affected the design process. For each major disaster, staff from the American Red Cross was on-call and therefore unavailable to make progress on the document. When they would return, they brought new stories and material for the report that could alter the current direction of the report. This may also indicate too great of a demand on the staff under the new regional structure. As it is still early after the reorganization, this problem may resolve itself when the staff is no longer in flux.

Finally, the wealth of newly available technologies proved to be a complicated topic as it allows the most freedom for advancing the genre of annual reports. With the digital age coming into full bloom, designers are gaining access to many new tools. Questions such as whether or not the report will be published online have become integral to the design of the report itself. In the case of online reports, basic web links allow a reader to jump from the annual report directly into related content elsewhere on the Internet or within the document itself. In addition, it becomes very easy for readers to share the report with friends or family through social media. Even in print, designers can now expect their readers to have access to smartphones that can read QR codes. These codes contain information that directs the user's smartphone to a URL. By strategically placing these codes within a document, a designer may allow readers to interact with the report. Of course, these new tools also present certain dangers to the existing concept of annual reports. One primary concern is that it becomes difficult to control how the organization presents itself across the wide audiences that may end up viewing the document. Another issue lies within the concept of linking: If you lead a reader away from a work, they may not return.

These new technologies call into question the future of annual reports. In a world of rapidly updated, easily available information, will printed annual reports continue to be useful documents? If, instead, annual reports embrace these new possibilities, at what point do they leave the genre of annual reports behind? One indicator may be that many companies and organizations are already hosting their annual reports online. As of now, many use simple PDF documents, but others, such as Rotary International use a browser application that allows users to zoom and navigate much like a digital magazine. On the other end of the spectrum, the information contained within corporate annual reports is mandated by the United States government. If the current trend does create a new genre, will mandatory annual reports revert to purely financial documents?

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